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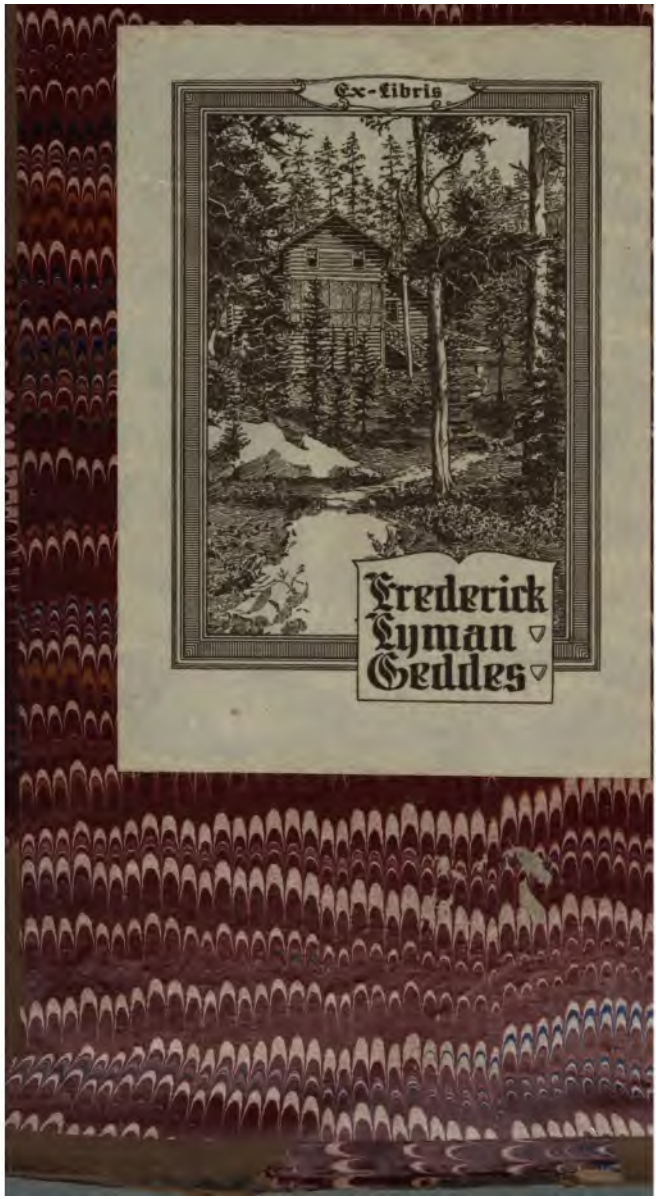
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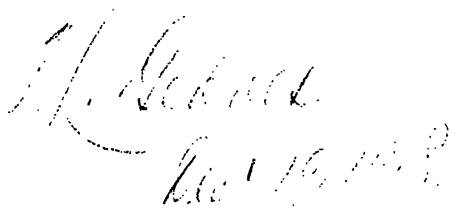

THE WORKS

OF

Felicia Dorothea (Browne)

MRS HEMANS;

WITH

A MEMOIR OF HER LIFE,

BY

HER SISTER.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

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V

Gift of the
Geddes Family
4-6-32

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LYRICS.

SONGS OF A GUARDIAN SPIRIT.

I.—NEAR THEE, STILL NEAR THEE!*

NEAR thee, still near thee!—o'er thy pathway gliding,
Unseen I pass thee with the wind's low sigh;
Life's veil enfolds thee still, our eyes dividing,
Yet viewless love floats round thee silently!

Not midst the festal throng,
In halls of mirth and song;
But when thy thoughts are deepest,
When holy tears thou weepest,
Know then *that* love is nigh!

* This piece has been set to music of most impressive beauty by John Lodge Ellerton, Esq., for whose compositions several of the author's songs were written.

When the night's whisper o'er thy harp-strings
creeping,
Or the sea-music on the sounding shore,
Or breezy anthems through the forest sweeping,
Shall move thy trembling spirit to adore;

When every thought and prayer
We loved to breathe and share,
On thy full heart returning,
Shall wake its voiceless yearning;
Then feel me near once more!

Near thee, still near thee!—trust thy soul's deep
dreaming!
Oh! love is not an earthly rose to die!
Even when I soar where fiery stars are beaming,
Thine image wanders with me through the sky.

The fields of air are free,
Yet lonely, wanting thee;
But when thy chains are falling,
When heaven its own is calling,
Know then, thy guide is nigh!

II.—OH! DROOP THOU NOT.

"They sin who tell us love can die!
With life all other passions fly—
All others are but vanity.
In heaven ambition cannot dwell,
Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
Earthly these passions, as of earth—
They perish where they drew their birth.
But love is indestructible!
Its holy flame for ever burneth—
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth."

SOUTHEY.

OH! droop thou not, my gentle earthly love!
Mine still to be!
I bore through death to brighter lands above,
My thoughts of thee.

Yes! the deep memory of our holy tears,
Our mingled prayer,
Our suffering love, through long devoted years,
Went with me there.

It was not vain, the hallow'd and the tried—
It was not vain!
Still, though unseen, still hovering at thy side,
I watch again!

From our own paths, our love's attesting bowers,
I am not gone;
In the deep calm of midnight's whispering hours,
Thou art not lone:

Not lone, when by the haunted stream thou weepest
—That stream whose tone
Murmurs of thoughts, the richest and the deepest,
We two have known:

Not lone, when mournfully some strain awaking
Of days long past,
From thy soft eyes the sudden tears are breaking,
Silent and fast:

Not lone, when upwards in fond visions turning
Thy dreamy glance,
Thou seek'st my home, where solemn stars are burning
O'er night's expanse.

My home is near thee, loved one! and around thee,
Where'er thou art;
Though still mortality's thick cloud hath bound thee,
Doubt not thy heart!

Hear its low voice, nor deem thyself forsaken:
Let faith be given
To the still tones which oft our being waken—
They are of heaven.

MIGNON'S SONG.

TRANSLATED FROM GOETHE.

[Mignon, a young and enthusiastic girl, (the character in one of Goethe's romances, from which Sir Walter Scott's Fenella is partially imitated,) has been stolen away, in early childhood, from Italy. Her vague recollections of that land, and of her early home, with its graceful sculptures and pictured saloons, are perpetually haunting her, and at times break forth into the following song. The original has been set to exquisite music, by Zelter, the friend of Goethe.]

"Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blühn?"

KNOW'ST thou the land where bloom the citron bowers,
Where the gold-orange lights the dusky grove?
High waves the laurel there, the myrtle flowers,
And through a still blue heaven the sweet winds rove.
Know'st thou it well?
There, there, with thee,
O friend! O loved one! fain my steps would flee.

Know'st thou the dwelling? There the pillars rise,
Soft shines the hall, the painted chambers glow;
And forms of marble seem with pitying eyes
To say—"Poor child! what thus hath wrought thee woe?"

Know'st thou it well?
There, there with thee,
O my protector! homewards might I flee!

Know'st thou the mountain? High its bridge is hung,
Where the mule seeks through mist and cloud his way;
There lurk the dragon-race, deep caves among,
O'er beetling rocks there foams the torrent-spray.
Know'st thou it well?
With thee, with thee,
There lies my path, O father! let us flee!

THE SISTERS.*

A BALLAD.

"I go, sweet sister! yet, my heart would linger with thee fain,
And unto every parting gift some deep remembrance chain;
Take, then, the braid of Eastern pearls which once I loved to wear,
And with it bind for festal scenes the dark waves of thy hair!
Its pale, pure brightness will beseem those raven tresses well,
And I shall need such pomp no more in my lone convent-cell."

* This ballad was composed for a kind of dramatic recitative, relieved by music. It was thus performed by two graceful and highly accomplished sisters.

"Oh, speak not thus, my Leonor! why part from
kindred love?
Through festive scenes, when thou art gone, my
steps no more shall move!
How could I bear a lonely heart amid a reckless
throng?
I should but miss earth's dearest voice in every tone
of song.
Keep, keep the braid of Eastern pearls, or let me
proudly twine
Its wreath once more around that brow, that queenly
brow of thine."

"Oh, wouldst thou strive a wounded bird from
shelter to detain?
Or wouldst thou call a spirit freed to weary life
again?
Sweet sister! take the golden cross that I have worn
so long,
And bathed with many a burning tear for secret
woe and wrong.
It could not still *my* beating heart! but may it be
a sign
Of peace and hope, my gentle one! when meekly
press'd to thine."

"Take back, take back the cross of gold, our
mother's gift to thee—
It would but of this parting hour a bitter token be;
With funeral splendour to mine eye, it would but
sadly shine,
And tell of early treasures lost, of joy no longer mine.

O sister! if thy heart be thus with buried grief
oppress'd,
Where wouldst thou pour it forth so well as on my
faithful breast?"

"Urge me no more! A blight hath fallen upon
my summer years!
I should but darken *thy* young life with fruitless
pangs and fears.
But take at least the lute I loved, and guard it for
my sake,
And sometimes from its silvery strings one tone of
memory wake!
Sing to those chords by starlight's gleam our own
sweet vesper hymn,
And think that I too chant it then, far in my cloister
dim."

"Yes, I *will* take the silvery lute—and I will sing
to thee
A song we heard in childhood's days, even from our
father's knee.
O sister! sister! are these notes amid forgotten
things?
Do they not linger as in love, on the familiar
strings?
Seems not our sainted mother's voice to murmur in
the strain?
Kind sister! gentlest Leonor! say shall it plead in
vain?"

SONG.

" Leave us not, leave us not !
Say not adieu !
Have we not been to thee
Tender and true ?

" Take not thy sunny smile
Far from our hearth !
With that sweet light will fade
Summer and mirth.

" Leave us not, leave us not !
Can thy heart roam ?
Wilt thou not pine to hear
Voices from home ?

" Too sad our love would be
If thou wert gone !
Turn to us, leave us not !
Thou art our own ! "

" O sister ! hush that thrilling lute !—oh, cease that haunting lay !
Too deeply pierce those wild, sweet notes—yet, yet I cannot stay ;
For weary, weary is my heart ! I hear a whisper'd call
In every breeze that stirs the leaf and bids the blossom fall.
I cannot breathe in freedom here, my spirit pines to dwell
Where the world's voice can reach no more ! O, calm thee !—Fare thee well ! "

THE LAST SONG OF SAPPHO.

[Suggested by a beautiful sketch, the design of the younge Westmacott. It represents Sappho sitting on a roc above the sea, with her lyre cast at her feet. There is desolate grace about the whole figure, which seems pen trated with the feeling of utter abandonment.]

SOUND on, thou dark, unslumbering sea!
My dirge is in thy moan;
My spirit finds response in thee
To its own ceaseless cry—"Alone, alone!"

Yet send me back one other word,
Ye tones that never cease!
Oh! let your secret caves be stirr'd,
And say, dark waters! will ye give me *peace?*

Away! my weary soul hath sought
In vain one echoing sigh,
One answer to consuming thought
In human hearts—and will the *wave* reply?

Sound on, thou dark unslumbering sea!
Sound in thy scorn and pride!
I ask not, alien world! from thee
What my own kindred earth hath still denied.

And yet I loved that earth so well,
With all its lovely things!
Was it for this the death-wind fell
On my rich lyre, and quench'd its living strings?

Let them lie silent at my feet!
Since, broken even as they,
The heart whose music made them sweet
Hath pour'd on desert sands its wealth away.

Yet glory's light hath touch'd my name,
The laurel-wreath is mine—
With a lone heart, a weary frame—
O restless deep! I come to make them thine!

Give to that crown, that burning crown,
Place in thy darkest hold!
Bury my anguish, my renown,
With hidden wrecks, lost gems, and wasted gold.

Thou sea-bird on the billow's crest!
Thou hast thy love, thy home;
They wait thee in the quiet nest,
And I, th' unsought, unwatch'd-for—I too come!

I, with this wingèd nature fraught,
These visions wildly free,
This boundless love, this fiery thought—
Alone I come—oh! give me peace, dark sea!

DIRGE.

WHERE shall we make her grave?
Oh! where the wild-flowers wave
In the free air!
Where shower and singing-bird

Midst the young leaves are heard—
There—lay her there!

Harsh was the world to her—
Now may sleep minister
Balm for each ill:
Low on sweet nature's breast
Let the meek heart find rest,
Deep, deep and still!

Murmur, glad waters! by;
Faint gales! with happy sigh,
Come wandering o'er
That green and mossy bed,
Where, on a gentle head,
Storms beat no more!

What though for her in vain
Falls now the bright spring-rain,
Plays the soft wind?
Yet still, from where she lies,
Should blessed breathings rise,
Gracious and kind.

Therefore let song and dew
Thence in the heart renew
Life's vernal glow!
And o'er that holy earth
Scents of the violet's birth
Still come and go!

Oh! then, where wild-flowers wave
Make ye her mossy grave,

In the free air !
Where shower and singing-bird
Midst the young leaves are heard—
There—lay her there !

A SONG OF THE ROSE.

" Cosi fior diverrai che non soggiace
All 'acqua, al gelo, al vento ed allo scherno
D' una stagion volubile e fugace;
E a piu fido Cultor posto in governo,
Unir potrai nella tranquilla pace,
Ad eterna Bellezza odore eterno."

PIETRO METASTASIO.

ROSE ! what dost thou here ?
Bridal, royal rose ?
How, midst grief and fear,
Canst thou thus disclose
That fervid hue of love, which to thy heart-leaf glows ?

Rose ! too much array'd
For triumphal hours,
Look'st thou through the shade
Of these mortal bowers,
Not to disturb my soul, thou crown'd one of all flowers !

As an eagle soaring
Through a sunny sky,
As a clarion pouring
Notes of victory,
So dost *thou* kindle thoughts, for earthly life too high.

Thoughts of rapture, flushing
Youthful poet's cheek;
Thoughts of glory, rushing
Forth in song to break,
But finding the spring-tide of rapid song too weak.

Yet, O festal rose!
I have seen thee lying
In thy bright repose
Pillow'd with the dying,
Thy crimson by the lip whence life's quick blood was flying.

Summer, hope, and love
O'er that bed of pain,
Met in thee, yet wove
Too, too frail a chain
In its embracing links the lovely to detain.

Smilest thou, gorgeous flower?
Oh! within the spells
Of thy beauty's power,
Something dimly dwells,
At variance with a world of sorrows and farewells.

All the soul forth flowing
In that rich perfume,
All the proud life glowing
In that radiant bloom—
Have they no place but *here*, beneath th' o'ershadowing tomb?

Crown'st thou but the daughters
Of our tearful race?
Heaven's own purest waters
Well might wear the trace
Of thy consummate form, melting to softer grace.

Will that clime enfold thee
With immortal air?
Shall we not behold thee
Bright and deathless there?
In spirit-lustre clothed, transcendantly more fair?

Yes! my fancy sees thee
In that light disclose,
And its dream thus frees thee
From the midst of woes,
Darkening thine earthly bowers, O bridal royal rose!

NIGHT-BLOWING FLOWERS.

CHILDREN of night! unfolding meekly, slowly
To the sweet breathings of the shadowy hours,
When dark-blue heavens look softest and most holy,
And glow-worm light is in the forest bowers;
To solemn things and deep,
To spirit-haunted sleep,
To thoughts, all purified
From earth, ye seem allied;
O dedicated flowers!

Ye, from the gaze of crowds your beauty veiling,
Keep in dim vestal urns the sweetness shrined;
Till the mild moon, on high serenely sailing,
Looks on you tenderly and sadly kind.
—So doth love's dreaming heart
Dwell from the throng apart,
And but to shades disclose
The inmost thought, which glows
With its pure life entwined.

Shut from the sounds wherein the day rejoices,
To no triumphant song your petals thrill,
But send forth odours with the faint, soft voices
Rising from hidden streams, when all is still.
So doth lone prayer arise,
Mingling with secret sighs,
When grief unfolds, like you,
Her breast, for heavenly dew
In silent hours to fill.

THE WANDERER AND THE NIGHT-FLOWERS.

"CALL back your odours, lovely flowers!
From the night-winds call them back;
And fold your leaves till the laughing hours
Come forth in the sunbeam's track!

"The lark lies couch'd in her grassy nest,
And the honey-bee is gone,
And all bright things are away to rest—
Why watch ye here alone?

" Is not your world a mournful one,
When your sisters close their eyes,
And your soft breath meets not a lingering tone
Of song in the starry skies?

" Take ye no joy in the dayspring's birth
When it kindles the sparks of dew?
And the thousand strains of the forest's mirth,
Shall they gladden all but you?

" Shut your sweet bells till the fawn comes out
On the sunny turf to play,
And the woodland child with a fairy shout
Goes dancing on its way!"

" Nay! let our shadowy beauty bloom
When the stars give quiet light,
And let us offer our faint perfume
On the silent shrine of night.

" Call it not wasted, the scent we lend
To the breeze, when no step is nigh:
Oh, thus for ever the earth should send
Her grateful breath on high!

" And love us as emblems, night's dewy flowers,
Of hopes unto sorrow given,
That spring though the gloom of the darkest hours
Looking alone to heaven!"

ECHO-SONG.

In thy cavern-hall,
Echo ! art thou sleeping ?
By the fountain's fall
Dreamy silence keeping ?
Yet one soft note borne
From the shepherd's horn,
Wakes thee, Echo ! into music leaping !
—Strange, sweet Echo ! into music leaping.

Then the woods rejoice,
Then glad sounds are swelling
From each sister-voice
Round thy rocky dwelling ;
And their sweetness fills
All the hollow hills,
With a thousand notes, of *one* life telling !—
Softly mingled notes, of one life telling.

Echo ! in my heart
Thus deep thoughts are lying,
Silent and apart,
Buried, yet undying.
Till some gentle tone
Wakening haply *one*,
Calls a thousand forth, like thee replying !—
Strange, sweet Echo ! even like thee replying.*

* This song is in the possession of Mr Power.

THE MUFFLED DRUM.*

THE muffled drum was heard
In the Pyrenees by night,
With a dull, deep rolling sound,
Which told the hamlets round
Of a soldier's burial-rite.

But it told them not how dear,
In a home beyond the main,
Was the warrior-youth laid low that hour
By a mountain-stream of Spain.

The oaks of England waved
O'er the slumbers of his race,
But a pine of the Ronceval made moan
Above *his* last, lone place;

When the muffled drum was heard
In the Pyrenees by night,
With a dull, deep rolling sound,
Which call'd strange echoes round
To the soldier's burial-rite.

Brief was the sorrowing *there*,
By the stream from battle red,
And tossing on its wave the plumes
Of many a stately head:

* Set to beautiful music by John Lodge Ellerton, Esq.

But a mother—soon to die,
And a sister—long to weep,
Even then were breathing prayers for him
In that home beyond the deep;

While the muffled drum was heard
In the Pyrenees by night,
With a dull, deep rolling sound,
And the dark pines mourn'd round,
O'er the soldier's burial-rite.

THE SWAN AND THE SKYLARK.

"Adieu, adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades."

KEATS.

"Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest."

SHELLEY.

MIDST the long reeds that o'er a Grecian stream
Unto the faint wind sigh'd melodiously,
And where the sculpture of a broken shrine
Sent out thro' shadowy grass and thick wild-flowers
Dim alabaster gleams—a lonely swan
Warbled his death-chant; and a poet stood
Listening to that strange music, as it shook
The lilies on the wave; and made the pines
And all the laurels of the haunted shore

Thrill to its passion. Oh! the tones were sweet,
Even painfully—as with the sweetness wrung
From parting love; and to the poet's thought
This was their language:—

"Summer! I depart—
O light and laughing summer! fare thee well:
No song the less through thy rich woods will swell,
For one, one broken heart.

"And fare ye well, young flowers!
Ye will not mourn! ye will shed odour still,
And wave in glory, colouring every rill,
Known to my youth's fresh hours.

"And ye, bright founts! that lie
Far in the whispering forests, lone and deep,
My wing no more shall stir your shadowy sleep—
Sweet waters! I must die.

"Will ye not send one tone
Of sorrow through the pines?—one murmur low?
Shall not the green leaves from your voices know
That I, your child, am gone?

"No! ever glad and free
Ye have no sounds a tale of death to tell:
Waves, joyous waves! flow on, and fare ye well!
Ye will not mourn for me.

"But thou, sweet boon! too late
Pour'd on my parting breath, vain gift of song!

Why com'st thou thus, o'ermastering, rich and strong,
In the dark hour of fate?

"Only to wake the sighs
Of echo-voices from their sparry cell;
Only to say—O sunshine and blue skies!
O life and love! farewell."

Thus flow'd the death-chant on; while mournfully
Low winds and waves made answer, and the tones
Buried in rocks along the Grecian stream—
Rocks and dim caverns of old Prophecy—
Woke to respond: and all the air was fill'd
With that one sighing sound—*Farewell! farewell!*
Fill'd with that sound? High in the calm blue heav'n
Even then a skylark hung; soft summer clouds
Were floating round him, all transpierced with light,
And midst that pearly radiance his dark wings
Quiver'd with song: such free, triumphant song,
As if tears were not,—as if breaking hearts
Had not a place below; and *thus* that strain
Spoke to the poet's ear exultingly:—

"The summer is come; she hath said *Rejoice!*
The wild-woods thrill to her merry voice;
Her sweet breath is wandering around, on high:
Sing, sing through the echoing sky!

"There is joy in the mountains! The bright waves leap
Like the bounding stag when he breaks from sleep;

Mirthfully, wildly, they flash along—
Let the heavens ring with song!

"There is joy in the forests! The bird of night
Hath made the leaves tremble with deep delight;
But *mine* is the glory to sunshine given—
Sing, sing through the echoing heaven!

"Mine are the wings of the soaring morn,
Mine are the fresh gales with dayspring born:
Only young rapture can mount so high—
Sing, sing through the echoing sky!"

So those two voices met; so Joy and Death
Mingled their accents; and, amidst the rush
Of many thoughts, the listening poet cried,—
"Oh! thou art mighty, thou art wonderful,
Mysterious nature! Not in thy free range
Of woods and wilds alone, thou blendest thus
The dirge-note and the song of festival;
But in one *heart*, one changeful human heart—
Ay, and within one hour of that strange world—
Thou call'st their music forth, with all its tones,
To startle and to pierce!—the dying swan's,
And the glad skylark's—triumph and despair!"

SONGS OF SPAIN.*

I.—ANCIENT BATTLE-SONG.

FLING forth the proud banner of Leon again!
Let the high word *Castile!* go resounding through Spain!
And thou, free Asturias! encamp'd on the height,
Pour down thy dark sons to the vintage of fight!
Wake, wake! the old soil where thy children repose
Sounds hollow and deep to the trampling of foes!

The voices are mighty that swell from the past,
With Arragon's cry on the shrill mountain-blast;
The ancient sierras give strength to our tread,
Their pines murmur song where bright blood hath been shed.
—Fling forth the proud banner of Leon again,
And shout ye "Castile! to the rescue for Spain!"

* Written for a set of airs, entitled *Peninsular Melodies*, selected by Colonel Hodges, and published by Messrs Goulding and D'Almaine, who have permitted the reappearance of the words in this volume.

II.—THE ZEGRI MAID.

[The Zegris were one of the most illustrious Moorish tribes. Their exploits and feuds with their celebrated rivals, the Abencerrages, form the subject of many ancient Spanish romances.]

THE summer leaves were sighing
Around the Zegri maid,
To her low, sad song replying
As it fill'd the olive shade.
"Alas! for her that loveth
Her land's, her kindred's foe!
Where a Christian Spaniard roveth,
Should a Zegri's spirit go?

"From thy glance, my gentle mother!
I sink, with shame oppress'd,
And the dark eye of my brother
Is an arrow to my breast."—
Where summer leaves were sighing
Thus sang the Zegri maid,
While the crimson day was dying
In the whispery olive shade.

"And for all this heart's wealth wasted,
This woe in secret borne,
This flower of young life blasted,
Should I win back aught but scorn?
By aught but daily dying
Would my lone truth be repaid?"—
Where the olive leaves were sighing,
Thus sang the Zegri maid.

III.—THE RIO VERDE SONG.

[The Rio Verde, a small river of Spain, is celebrated in the old ballad romances of that country for the frequent combats on its banks between Moor and Christian. The ballad referring to this stream in *Percy's Reliques*, will be remembered by many readers,—

"Gentle river, gentle river
Lo! thy streams are stain'd with gore."]

FLOW, Rio Verde!
In melody flow;
Win her that weepeth
To slumber from woe;
Bid thy wave's music
Roll through her dreams—
Grief ever loveth
The kind voice of streams.

Bear her lone spirit
Afar on the sound
Back to her childhood,
Her life's fairy ground;
Pass like the whisper
Of love that is gone—
Flow, Rio Verde!
Softly flow on!

Dark glassy water
So crimson'd of yore!
Love, death, and sorrow
Know thy green shore.

Thou shouldst have echoes
For grief's deepest tone—
Flow, Rio Verde!
Softly flow on!

IV.—SEEK BY THE SILVERY DARRO.

SEEK by the silvery Darro,
Where jasmine flowers have blown:
There hath she left no footsteps?
—Weep, weep! the maid is gone!

Seek where our lady's image
Smiles o'er the pine-hung steep:
Hear ye not there her vespers?
—Weep for the parted, weep!

Seek in the porch where vine-leaves
O'ershade her father's head:
Are *his* grey hairs left lonely?
—Weep! her bright soul is fled.

V.—SPANISH EVENING HYMN.

AVE! now let prayer and music
Meet in love on earth and sea!
Now, sweet Mother! may the weary
Turn from this cold world to thee!

From the wide and restless waters
Hear the sailor's hymn arise!

From his watch-fire midst the mountains,
Lo! to thee the shepherd cries!

Yet, when thus full hearts find voices,
If o'erburden'd souls there be,
Dark and silent in their anguish,
Aid those captives! set them free!

Touch them, every fount unsealing
Where the frozen tears lie deep;
Thou, the Mother of all sorrows,
Aid! oh aid to pray and weep!

VI.—BIRD THAT ART SINGING ON EBRO'S SIDE!

Bird that art singing on Ebro's side!
Where myrtle shadows make dim the tide,
Doth sorrow dwell midst the leaves with thee?
Doth song avail thy full heart to free?
—Bird of the midnight's purple sky!
Teach me the spell of thy melody.

Bird! is it blighted affection's pain
Whence the sad sweetness flows through thy strain
And is the wound of that arrow still'd
When thy lone music the leaves hath fill'd?
—Bird of the midnight's purple sky!
Teach me the spell of thy melody.

VII.—MOORISH GATHERING-SONG.

ZORZICO.*

CHAINS on the cities! gloom in the air!
Come to the hills! fresh breezes are there.
Silence and fear in the rich orange-bowers!
Come to the rocks where freedom hath towers.

Come from the Darro!—changed is its tone;
Come where the streams no bondage have known;
Wildly and proudly foaming they leap,
Singing of freedom from steep to steep.

Come from Alhambra!—garden and grove
Now may not shelter beauty or love.
Blood on the waters! death midst the flowers!
—Only the spear and the rock are ours.

VIII.—THE SONG OF MINA'S SOLDIERS.

WE heard thy name, O Mina!
Far through our hills it rang;
A sound more strong than tempests,
More keen than armour's clang.

The peasant left his vintage,
The shepherd grasp'd the spear—
We heard thy name, O Mina!
—The mountain-bands are here.

* The Zorzico is an extremely wild and singular antique *Moorish melody.*

As eagles to the dayspring,
  As torrents to the sea,
From every dark sierra
  So rush'd our hearts to thee.

Thy spirit is our banner,
  Thine eye our beacon-sign,
Thy name our trumpet, Mina!
  —The mountain-bands are thine.

IX.—MOTHER! OH, SING ME TO REST.

A CANCION.

MOTHER! oh, sing me to rest
  As in my bright days departed:
  Sing to thy child, the sick-hearted,
Songs for a spirit oppress'd.

Lay this tired head on thy breast!
  Flowers from the night-dew are closing,
  Pilgrims and mourners reposing:
Mother! oh, sing me to rest!

Take back thy bird to its nest!
  Weary is young life when blighted,
  Heavy this love unrequited;
—Mother, oh! sing me to rest!

X.—THERE ARE SOUNDS IN THE DARK RONCESVALLES.

THERE are sounds in the dark Roncesvalles,
  There are echoes on Biscay's wild shore;
There are murmurs—but not of the torrent,
  Nor the wind, nor the pine-forest's roar.

'Tis a day of the spear and the banner,
  Of armings and hurried farewells;
Rise, rise on your mountains, ye Spaniards!
  Or start from your old battle-dells.

There are streams of unconquer'd Asturias
  That have roll'd with your fathers' free blood:
Oh! leave on the graves of the mighty
  Proud marks where their children have stood!

THE CURFEW-SONG OF ENGLAND.

HARK! from the dim church-tower,
  The deep, slow Curfew's chime!
—A heavy sound unto hall and bower
  In England's olden time!
Sadly 'twas heard by him who came
  From the fields of his toil at night,
And who might not see his own hearth-flame
  In his children's eyes make light.

Sternly and sadly heard,
As it quench'd the wood-fire's glow,
Which had cheer'd the board with the mirthful word,
And the red wine's foaming flow!
Until that sullen, boding knell,
Flung out from every fane,
On harp, and lip, and spirit, fell,
With a weight and with a chain.

Woe for the pilgrim then
In the wild-deer's forest far!
No cottage lamp, to the haunts of men,
Might guide him, as a star.
And woe for him whose wakeful soul,
With lone aspirings fill'd,
Would have lived o'er some immortal scroll,
While the sounds of earth were still'd!

And yet a deeper woe
For the watcher by the bed,
Where the fondly-loved in pain lay low,
In pain and sleepless dread!
For the mother, doom'd unseen to keep
By the dying babe, her place,
And to feel its flitting pulse, and weep,
Yet not behold its face!

Darkness in chieftain's hall!
Darkness in peasant's cot!
While freedom, under that shadowy pall,
Sat mourning o'er her lot.

Oh! the fireside's peace we well may prize!
For blood hath flow'd like rain,
Pour'd forth to make sweet sanctuaries
Of England's homes again.

Heap the yule-fagots high
Till the red light fills the room!
It is home's own hour when the stormy sky
Grows thick with evening gloom.
Gather ye round the holy hearth,
And by its gladdening blaze,
Unto thankful bliss we will change our mirth,
With a thought of the olden days!

THE CALL TO BATTLE.

"Ah! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears, and tremblings of distress,
And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs,
Which ne'er might be repeated."

BYRON.

THE vesper-bell, from church and tower,
Had sent its dying sound;
And the household, in the hush of eve,
Were met their porch around.

A voice rang through the olive-wood, with a sudden trumpet's power—
"We rise on all our hills! Come forth! 'tis thy country's gathering-hour:

There's a gleam of spears by every stream in each
old battle-dell.
Come forth, young Juan! Bid thy home a brief
and proud farewell!"

Then the father gave his son the sword,
Which a hundred fights had seen—
"Away! and bear it back, my boy!
All that it still hath been!

"Haste, haste! The hunters of the foe are up: and
who shall stand
The lion-like awakening of the roused indignant
land?
Our chase shall sound through each defile where
swept the clarion's blast,
With the flying footsteps of the Moor, in stormy
ages past."

Then the mother kiss'd her son with tears
That o'er his dark locks fell:
"I bless, I bless thee o'er and o'er,
Yet I stay thee not—Farewell!

"One moment! but one moment give to parting
thought or word!
It is no time for woman's tears when manhood's
heart is stirred.
Bear but the memory of my love about thee in the
fight,
To breathe upon th' avenging sword a spell of
keener might."

And a maiden's fond adieu was heard,
Though deep, yet brief and low:
" In the vigil, in the conflict, love!
My prayer shall with thee go!

" Come forth! come as the torrent comes when the winter's chain is burst!
So rushes on the land's revenge, in night and silence nursed.
The night is past, the silence o'er—on all our hills we rise:
We wait thee, youth! sleep, dream no more! the voice of battle cries."

There were sad hearts in a darken'd home,
When the brave had left their bower;
But the strength of prayer and sacrifice
Was with them in that hour.

SONGS FOR SUMMER HOURS.

I.—AND I TOO IN ARCADIA.

[A celebrated picture of Poussin's represents a band of shepherd-youths and maidens suddenly checked in their wanderings, and affected with various emotions, by the sight of a tomb which bears this inscription—"*Et in Arcadia ego.*"]

THEY have wander'd in their glee
With the butterfly and bee;
They have climb'd o'er heathery swells,
They have wound through forest dells;
Mountain-moss hath felt their tread,
Woodland streams their way have led;
Flowers, in deepest shadowy nooks,
Nurslings of the loneliest brooks,
Unto them have yielded up
Fragrant bell and starry cup:
Chaplets are on every brow—
What hath staid the wanderers now?

Lo! a grey and rustic tomb,
Bower'd amidst the rich wood-gloom;
Whence these words their stricken spirits melt,
—"I too, Shepherds! in Arcadia dwelt."

There is many a summer sound
That pale sepulchre around;
Through the shade young birds are glancing,
Insect-wings in sun-streaks dancing;
Glimpses of blue festal skies
Pouring in when soft winds rise;
Violets o'er the turf below
Shedding out their warmest glow;
Yet a spirit not its own
O'er the greenwood now is thrown!
Something of an under-note
Through its music seems to float,
Something of a stillness grey
Creeps across the laughing day:
Something dimly from those old words felt,
—"I too, Shepherds! in Arcadia dwelt."

Was some gentle kindred maid
In that grave with dirges laid?
Some fair creature, with the tone
Of whose voice a joy is gone,
Leaving melody and mirth
Poorer on this alter'd earth?
Is it thus? that so they stand,
Dropping flowers from every hand—
Flowers, and lyres, and gather'd store
Of red wild-fruit prized no more?

—No! from that bright band of morn
Not one link hath yet been torn:
'Tis the shadow of the tomb
Falling o'er the summer-bloom—
O'er the flush of love and life
Passing with a sudden strife;
'Tis the low prophetic breath
Murmuring from that house of death,
Whose faint whisper thus their hearts can melt,
—"I too, Shepherds! in Arcadia dwelt."

II.—THE WANDERING WIND.

THE Wind, the wandering Wind
Of the golden summer eves—
Whence is the thrilling magic
Of its tones among the leaves?
Oh! is it from the waters,
Or from the long tall grass?
Or is it from the hollow rocks
Through which its breathings pass?

Or is it from the voices
Of all in one combined,
That it wins the tone of mastery?
The Wind, the wandering Wind!
No, no! the strange, sweet accents
That with it come and go,
They are not from the osiers,
Nor the fir-trees whispering low;

They are not of the waters,
Nor of the cavern'd hill :
'Tis the human love within us
That gives them power to thrill.
They touch the links of memory
Around our spirits twined,
And we start, and weep, and tremble,
To the Wind, the wandering Wind!

III.—YE ARE NOT MISS'D, FAIR FLOWERS!

Ye are not miss'd, fair flowers, that late were spreading
The summer's glow by fount and breezy grot ;
There falls the dew, its fairy favours shedding—
The leaves dance on, the young birds miss you not.

Still plays the sparkle o'er the rippling water,
O lily! whence thy cup of pearl is gone ;
The bright wave mourns not for its loveliest daughter,
There is no sorrow in the wind's low tone.

And thou, meek hyacinth! afar is roving
The bee that oft thy trembling bells hath kiss'd.
Cradled ye were, fair flowers! midst all things loving,
A joy to all—yet, yet, ye are not miss'd!

Ye, that were born to lend the sunbeam gladness,
And the winds fragrance, wandering where they list,
Oh! it were breathing words too deep in sadness,
To say earth's *human* flowers not more are miss'd.

IV.—THE WILLOW SONG.

WILLOW! in thy breezy moan,
I can hear a deeper tone;
Through thy leaves come whispering low
Faint, sweet sounds of long ago.
Willow! sighing willow!

Many a mournful tale of old
Heart-sick love to thee hath told,
Gathering from thy golden bough
Leaves to cool his burning brow.
Willow! sighing willow!

Many a swan-like song to thee
Hath been sung, thou gentle tree!
Many a lute its last lament
Down thy moonlight stream hath sent.
Willow! sighing willow!

Therefore, wave and murmur on!
Sigh for sweet affections gone,
And for tuneful voices fled,
And for love, whose heart hath bled,
Ever, willow! willow!

V.—LEAVE ME NOT YET.

LEAVE me not yet! through rosy skies from far,
But now the song-birds to their nests return;

The quivering image of the first pale star
On the dim lake scarce yet begins to burn :
Leave me not yet !

Not yet ! oh, hark ! low tones from hidden streams,
Piercing the shivery leaves, even now arise ;
Their voices mingle not with daylight dreams,
They are of vesper's hymns and harmonies :
Leave me not yet !

My thoughts are like those gentle sounds, dear love !
By day shut up in their own still recess ;
They wait for dews on earth, for stars above,
Then to breathe out their soul of tenderness :
Leave me not yet !

VI.—THE ORANGE BOUGH.

Oh ! bring me one sweet orange-bough,
To fan my cheek, to cool my brow ;
One bough, with pearly blossoms drest,
And bind it, mother ! on my breast !

Go, seek the grove along the shore,
Whose odours I must breathe no more ;
The grove where every scented tree
Thrills to the deep voice of the sea.

Oh ! Love's fond sighs, and fervent prayer,
And wild farewell, are lingering there :
Each leaf's light whisper hath a tone
My faint heart, even in death, would own.

Then bear me thence one bough, to shed
Life's parting sweetness round my head;
And bind it, mother ! on my breast
When I am laid in lonely rest.

VII.—THE STREAM SET FREE.

Flow on, rejoice, make music,
Bright living stream set free !
The troubled haunts of care and strife
Were not for thee !

The woodland is thy country,
Thou art all its own again ;
The wild birds are thy kindred race,
That fear no chain.

Flow on, rejoice, make music
Unto the glistening leaves !
Thou, the beloved of balmy winds
And golden eves !

Once more the holy starlight
Sleeps calm upon thy breast,
Whose brightness bears no token more
Of man's unrest.

Flow, and let freeborn music
Flow with thy wavy line,
While the stock-dove's lingering, loving voice
Comes blent with thine.

And the green reeds quivering o'er thee,
Strings of the forest-lyre,
All fill'd with answering spirit-sounds,
In joy respire.

Yet, midst thy song's glad changes,
Oh! keep one pitying tone
For gentle hearts, that bear to thee
Their sadness lone.

One sound, of all the deepest,
To bring, like healing dew,
A sense that nature ne'er forsakes
The meek and true.

Then, then, rejoice, make music,
Thou stream, thou glad and free!
The shadows of all glorious flowers
Be set in thee!

VIII.—THE SUMMER'S CALL.

Come away! The sunny hours
Woo thee far to founts and bowers!
O'er the very waters now,
In their play,
Flowers are shedding beauty's glow—
Come away!
Where the lily's tender gleam
Quivers on the glancing stream,
Come away!

All the air is fill'd with sound,
Soft, and sultry, and profound;
Murmurs through the shadowy grass
Lightly stray;
Faint winds whisper as they pass—
Come away!
Where the bee's deep music swells
From the trembling foxglove bells,
Come away!

In the skies the sapphire blue
Now hath won its richest hue;
In the woods the breath of song
Night and day
Floats with leafy scents along—
Come away!
Where the boughs with dewy gloom
Darken each thick bed of bloom,
Come away!

In the deep heart of the rose
Now the crimson love-hue glows;
Now the glow-worm's lamp by night
Sheds a ray,
Dreamy, starry, greenly bright—
Come away!
Where the fairy cup-moss lies,
With the wild-wood strawberries,
Come away!

Now each tree by summer crown'd,
Sheds its own rich twilight round;

Glancing there from sun to shade,
Bright wings play;
There the deer its couch hath made—
Come away!
Where the smooth leaves of the lime
Glisten in their honey-time,
Come away—away!

IX.—OH! SKYLARK, FOR THY WING.

Oh! Skylark, for thy wing!
Thou bird of joy and light,
That I might soar and sing
At heaven's empyreal height!
With the heathery hills beneath me,
Whence the streams in glory spring,
And the pearly clouds to wreath me,
O Skylark! on thy wing!

Free, free from earth-born fear,
I would range the blessed skies,
Through the blue divinely clear,
Where the low mists cannot rise!
And a thousand joyous measures
From my chainless heart should spring,
Like the bright rain's vernal treasures,
As I wander'd on thy wing.

But oh! the silver cords
That around the heart are spun,

From gentle tones and words,
And kind eyes that make our sun!
To some low, sweet nest returning,
How soon my love would bring
There, *there* the dews of morning,
O Skylark! on thy wing!

GENIUS SINGING TO LOVE.

"That voice re-measures
Whatever tones and melancholy pleasures
The things of nature utter; birds or trees,
Or where the tall grass mid the heath-plant waves,
Murmur and music thin of sudden breeze."

COLERIDGE.

I HEARD a song upon the wandering wind,
A song of many tones—though one full soul
Breathed through them all imploringly; and made
All nature as they pass'd, all quivering leaves
And low responsive reeds and waters, thrill
As with the consciousness of human prayer.
—At times the passion-kindled melody
Might seem to gush from Sappho's fervent heart,
Over the wild sea-wave;—at times the strain
Flow'd with more plaintive sweetness, as if born
Of Petrarch's voice, beside the lone Vaucluse;
And sometimes, with its melancholy swell,
A graver sound was mingled, a deep note
Of Tasso's holy lyre. Yet still the tones
Were of a suppliant—"*Leave me not!*" was still
The burden of their music; and I knew
The lay which Genius, in its loneliness,

Its own still world, amidst th' o'erpeopled world,
Hath ever breathed to Love.

" They crown me with the glistening crown,
Borne from a deathless tree;
I hear the pealing music of renown—
O Love! forsake me not!
Mine were a lone dark lot,
Bereft of thee!
They tell me that my soul can throw
A glory o'er the earth;
From thee, from *thee*, is caught that golden glow!
Shed by thy gentle eyes,
It gives to flower and skies
A bright, new birth!

" Thence gleams the path of morning
Over the kindling hills, a sunny zone!
Thence to its heart of hearts the rose is burning
With lustre not its own!
Thence every wood-recess
Is filled with loveliness,
Each bower, to ring-doves and dim violets known.

" I see all beauty by the ray
That streameth from thy smile;
Oh! bear it, bear it not away!
Can that sweet light beguile?
Too pure, too spirit-like, it seems,
To linger long by earthly streams;
I clasp it with th' alloy
Of fear midst quivering joy.

Yet must I perish if the gift depart—
Leave me not, Love! to mine own beating heart!

" The music from my lyre
With thy swift step would flee;
The world's cold breath would quench the starry fire
In my deep soul—a temple fill'd with thee!
Seal'd would the fountains lie,
The waves of harmony,
Which thou alone canst free!

" Like a shrine midst rocks forsaken,
Whence the oracle hath fled;
Like a harp which none might waken
But a mighty master dead;
Like the vase of a perfume scatter'd,
Such would my spirit be—
So mute, so void, so shatter'd,
Bereft of thee!

" Leave me not, Love! or if this earth
Yield not for thee a home,
If the bright summer-land of thy pure birth
Send thee a silvery voice that whispers '*Come!*'
Then, with the glory from the rose,
With the sparkle from the stream,
With the light thy rainbow-presence throws
Over the poet's dream;
With all th' Elysian hues
Thy pathway that suffuse,
With joy, with music, from the fading grove,
Take *me*, too, heavenward on thy wing, sweet Love!"

MUSIC AT A DEATHBED.

"Music! why thy power employ
Only for the sons of joy?
Only for the smiling guests
At natal or at nuptial feasts?
Rather thy lenient numbers pour
On those whom secret griefs devour;
And with some softly-whisper'd air
Smooth the brow of dumb despair!"

WARTON from EURIPIDES.

BRING music! stir the brooding air
With an ethereal breath!
Bring sounds, my struggling soul to bear
Up from the couch of death!

A voice, a flute, a dreamy lay,
Such as the southern breeze
Might waft, at golden fall of day,
O'er blue, transparent seas!

Oh, no! not such! that lingering spell
Would lure me back to life,
When my wean'd heart hath said farewell,
And pass'd the gates of strife.

Let not a sigh of human love
Blend with the song its tone!
Let no disturbing echo move
One that must die alone!

But pour a solemn-breathing strain
Fill'd with the soul of prayer!

Let a life's conflict, fear, and pain,
And trembling hope be there.

Deeper, yet deeper ! in my thought
Lies more prevailing sound,
A harmony intensely fraught
With pleading more profound:

A passion unto music given,
A sweet, yet piercing cry;
A breaking heart's appeal to Heaven,
A bright faith's victory !

Deeper! Oh! may no richer power
Be in those notes enshrined ?
Can all, which crowds on earth's last hour
No fuller language find ?

Away! and hush the feeble song,
And let the chord be still'd!
Far in another land ere long
My dream shall be fulfill'd.

MARSHAL SCHWERIN'S GRAVE.

["I came upon the tomb of Marshal Schwerin—a plain, quiet cenotaph, erected in the middle of a wide corn-field, on the very spot where he closed a long, faithful, and glorious career in arms. He fell here, at eighty years of age, at the head of his own regiment, the standard of it waving in his hand. His seat was in the leathern saddle—his foot in the iron stirrup—his fingers reined the young war-horse to the last."—*Notes and Reflections during a Ramble into Germany.*]

THOU didst fall in the field with thy silver hair,
And a banner in thy hand;
Thou wert laid to rest from thy battles there,
By a proudly mournful band.

In the camp, on the steed, to the bugle's blast,
Thy long bright years had sped;
And a warrior's bier was thine at last,
When the snows had crown'd thy head.

Many had fallen by thy side, old chief!
Brothers and friends, perchance;
But thou wert yet as the fadeless leaf,
And light was in thy glance.

The soldier's heart at thy step leap'd high,
And thy voice the war-horse knew;
And the first to arm, when the foe was nigh,
Wert thou, the bold and true.

Now may'st thou slumber—thy work is done—
Thou of the well-worn sword!
From the stormy fight in thy fame thou'rt gone,
But not to the festal board.

The corn-sheaves whisper thy grave around,
Where fiery blood hath flow'd:
O lover of battle and trumpet-sound!
Thou art couch'd in a still abode!

A quiet home from the noonday's glare,
And the breath of the wintry blast—
Didst thou toil through the days of thy silvery hair,
To win thee but *this* at last?

THE FALLEN LIME-TREE.

O JOY of the peasant! O stately lime!
Thou art fall'n in thy golden honey-time!
Thou whose wavy shadows,
Long and long ago,
Screen'd our grey forefathers
From the noontide's glow;
Thou, beneath whose branches,
Touched with moonlight gleams,
Lay our early poets
Wrapt in fairy dreams.
O tree of our fathers! O hallow'd tree!
A glory is gone from our home with thee.

Where shall now the weary
Rest through summer eves?
Or the bee find honey,
As on thy sweet leaves?
Where shall now the ringdove
Build again her nest?
She so long the inmate
Of thy fragrant breast!
But the sons of the peasant have lost in thee
Far more than the ringdove, far more than the bee!

These may yet find coverts
Leafy and profound,
Full of dewy dimness,
Odour, and soft sound!
But the gentle memories
Clinging all to thee,
When shall they be gather'd
Round another tree?
O pride of our fathers! O hallow'd tree!
The crown of the hamlet is fallen in thee!

SONGS OF CAPTIVITY.

[These songs (with the exception of the fifth) have all been set to music by the author's sister, and are in the possession of Mr Willis, by whose permission they are here published.]

INTRODUCTION.

ONE hour for distant homes to weep
Midst Afric's burning sands,
One silent sunset hour was given
To the slaves of many lands.

They sat beneath a lonely palm,
In the gardens of their lord;
And, mingling with the fountain's tune,
Their songs of exile pour'd.

And strangely, sadly did those lays
Of Alp and ocean sound,
With Afric's wild, red skies above,
And solemn wastes around.

Broken with tears were oft their tones,
And most when most they tried
To breathe of hope and liberty,
From hearts that inly died.

So met the sons of many lands,
  Parted by mount and main;
So did they sing in brotherhood,
  Made kindred by the chain.

I.—THE BROTHER'S DIRGE.

In the proud old fanes of England
  My warrior-fathers lie,
Banners hang drooping o'er their dust
  With gorgeous blazonry.
    But thou, but *thou*, my brother!
      O'er the dark billows sweep—
    The best and bravest heart of all
      Is shrouded by the deep.

In the old high wars of England
  My noble fathers bled;
For her lion-kings of lance and spear,
  They went down to the dead.
    But thou, but thou, my brother!
      Thy life-drops flow'd for me—
    Would I were with thee in thy rest,
      Young sleeper of the sea!

In a shelter'd home of England
  Our sister dwells alone,
With quick heart listening for the sound
  Of footsteps that are gone.

She little dreams, my brother!
Of the wild fate we have found;
I, midst the Afric sands a slave,
Thou, by the dark seas bound.

II.—THE ALPINE HORN.

THE Alpine horn! the Alpine horn!
Oh! through my native sky,
Might I but hear its deep notes borne
Once more—but once—and die!

Yet, no! midst breezy hills thy breath,
So full of hope and morn,
Would win me from the bed of death—
O joyous Alpine horn!

But *here* the echo of that blast,
To many a battle known,
Seems mournfully to wander past,
A wild, shrill, wailing tone!

Haunt me no more! for slavery's air
Thy proud notes were not born;
The dream but deepens my despair—
Be hush'd, thou Alpine horn!

III.—O YE VOICES!

O YE voices round my own hearth singing,
As the winds of May to memory sweet!
Might I yet return, a worn heart bringing,
Would those vernal tones the wanderer greet,
Once again?

Never, never! Spring hath smiled and parted
Oft since then your fond farewell was said;
O'er the green turf of the gentle-hearted
Summer's hand the rose-leaves may have shed,
Oft again!

Or if still around my heart ye linger,
Yet, sweet voices! there must change have come:
Years have quell'd the free soul of the singer,
Vernal tones shall greet the wanderer home
Ne'er again!

IV.—I DREAM OF ALL THINGS FREE.

I DREAM of all things free!
Of a gallant, gallant bark
That sweeps through storm and sea,
Like an arrow to its mark!
Of a stag that o'er the hills
Goes bounding in his glee;
Of a thousand flashing rills—
Of all things glad and free.

I dream of some proud bird,
A bright-eyed mountain-king!
In my visions I have heard
The rushing of his wing.
I follow some wild river,
On whose breast no sail may be;
Dark woods around it shiver—
I dream of all things free!

Of a happy forest child,
With the fawns and flowers at play;
Of an Indian midst the wild,
With the stars to guide his way;
Of a chief his warriors leading,
Of an archer's greenwood tree—
My heart in chains is bleeding,
And I dream of all things free!

V.—FAR O'ER THE SEA.

WHERE are the vintage songs
Wandering in glee?
Where dance the peasant bands
Joyous and free?
Under a kind blue sky,
Where doth my birthplace lie?
—Far o'er the sea.

Where floats the myrtle-scent
O'er vale and lea,

When evening calls the dove
  Homewards to flee!
Where doth the orange gleam
Soft on my native stream?
  —Far o'er the sea!

Where are sweet eyes of love
  Watching for me?
Where o'er the cabin roof
  Waves the green tree?
Where speaks the vesper-chime
Still of a holy time?
  —Far o'er the sea.

Dance on, ye vintage bands!
  Fearless and free;
Still fresh and greenly wave,
  My father's tree!
Still smile, ye kind, blue skies!
Though your son pines and dies
  Far o'er the sea!

VI.—THE INVOCATION.

Oh! art thou still on earth, my love?
  My only love!
Or smiling in a brighter home,
  Far, far above?

Oh ! is thy sweet voice fled, my love
Thy light step gone ?
And art thou not, in earth or heaven,
Still, still my own ?

I see thee with thy gleaming hair,
In midnight dreams !
But cold, and clear, and spirit-like,
Thy soft eye seems.

Peace in thy saddest hour, my love !
Dwelt on thy brow ;
But something mournfully divine
There shineth now !

And silent ever is thy lip,
And pale thy cheek ;—
Oh ! art thou earth's, or art thou heaven's ?
Speak to me, speak !

VII.—THE SONG OF HOPE.

Droop not, my brothers ! I hear a glad strain—
We shall burst forth like streams from the winter night's chain ;
A flag is unfurl'd, a bright star of the sea,
A ransom approaches—we yet shall be free !

Where the pines wave, where the light chamois leaps,
Where the lone eagle hath built on the steeps ;

Where the snows glisten, the mountain-rills foam,
Free as the falcon's wing, yet shall we roam.

Where the hearth shines, where the kind looks are
met,
Where the smiles mingle, our place shall be yet!
Crossing the desert, o'ersweeping the sea—
Droop not, my brothers! we yet shall be free!

THE BIRD AT SEA.

Bird of the greenwood!
Oh, why art thou here?
Leaves dance not o'er thee,
Flowers bloom not near.
All the sweet waters
Far hence are at play—
Bird of the greenwood!
Away, away!

Where the mast quivers
Thy place will not be,
As midst the waving
Of wild-rose and tree.
How shouldst thou battle
With storm and with spray?
Bird of the greenwood!
Away, away!

Or art thou seeking
Some brighter land,

Where by the south wind
  Vine leaves are fann'd ?
Midst the wild billows
  Why then delay ?
Bird of the greenwood !
  Away, away !

" Chide not my lingering
  Where storms are dark ;
A hand that hath nursed me
  Is in the bark—
A heart that hath cherish'd
  Through winter's long day,
So I turn from the greenwood,
  Away, away !"

THE DYING GIRL AND FLOWERS.

" I desire, as I look on these, the ornaments and children of earth, to know whether, indeed, such things I shall see no more?—whether they have no likeness, no archetype in the world in which my future home is to be cast? or whether they have their images above, only wrought in a more wondrous and delightful mould."

Conversations with an ambitious Student in ill health.

Bear them not from grassy dells
Where wild bees have honey-cells ;
Not from where sweet water-sounds
Thrill the greenwood to its bounds ;
Not to waste their scented breath
On the silent room of Death !

Kindred to the breeze they are,
And the glow-worm's emerald star,

And the bird whose song is free,
And the many-whispering tree:
Oh! too deep a love, and vain,
They would win to earth again.

Spread them not before the eyes
Closing fast on summer skies!
Woo thou not the spirit back
From its lone and viewless track,
With the bright things which have birth
Wide o'er all the colour'd earth!

With the violet's breath would rise
Thoughts too sad for her who dies;
From the lily's pearl-cup shed,
Dreams too sweet would haunt her bed;
Dreams of youth—of spring-time's eves—
Music—beauty—all she leaves!

Hush! 'tis thou that dreaming art,
Calmer is *her* gentle heart.
Yes! o'er fountain, vale, and grove,
Leaf and flower, hath gush'd her love;
But that passion, deep and true,
Knows not of a last adieu.

Types of lovelier forms than these
In their fragile mould she sees;
Shadows of yet richer things,
Born beside immortal springs,
Into fuller glory wrought,
Kindled by surpassing thought!

Therefore, in the lily's leaf,
She can read no word of grief;
O'er the woodbine she can dwell,
Murmuring not—Farewell! farewell!
And her dim, yet speaking eye
Greets the violet solemnly.

Therefore once, and yet again,
Strew them o'er her bed of pain;
From her chamber take the gloom
With a light and flush of bloom:
So should one depart, who goes
Where no death can touch the rose!

THE IVY-SONG.*

Oh! how could fancy crown with *thee*,
In ancient days, the God of Wine,
And bid thee at the banquet be
Companion of the Vine?
Ivy! *thy* home is where each sound
Of revelry hath long been o'er;
Where song and beaker once went round,
But now are known no more;
Where long-fallen gods recline,
There the place is thine.

* This song, as originally written, the reader will have met with in an earlier part of this publication. Being afterwards completely remodelled by Mrs Hemans, perhaps no apology is requisite for its re-insertion here.

The Roman, on his battle-plains,
Where kings before his eagles bent,
With thee, amidst exulting strains,
Shadow'd the victor's tent.
Though, shining there in deathless green,
Triumphantly thy boughs might wave,
Better thou lovest the silent scene
Around the victor's grave—
Urn and sculpture half divine
Yield their place to thine.

The cold halls of the regal dead,
Where lone the Italian sunbeams dwell,
Where hollow sounds the lightest tread—
Ivy! they know thee well!
And far above the festal vine
Thou wavest where once proud banners hung,
Where mouldering turrets crest the Rhine—
The Rhine, still fresh and young!
Tower and rampart o'er the Rhine,
Ivy! all are thine!

High from the fields of air look down
Those eyries of a vanish'd race,
Where harp, and battle, and renown,
Have pass'd, and left no trace.
But thou art there!—serenely bright,
Meeting the mountain-storms with bloom,
Thou that wilt climb the loftiest height,
Or crown the lowliest tomb!
Ivy! Ivy! all are thine,
Palace, hearth, and shrine.

'Tis still the same: our pilgrim-tread
O'er classic plains, through deserts free,
On the mute path of ages fled,
Still meets decay and thee.
And still let man his fabrics rear,
August in beauty, stern in power—
Days pass—thou Ivy never sere,*
And thou shalt have thy dower.
All are thine, or must be thine—
Temple, pillar, shrine!

THE MUSIC OF ST PATRICK'S.

[The choral music of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, is almost unrivalled in its combined powers of voice, organ, and scientific skill. The majestic harmony of effect thus produced is not a little deepened by the character of the church itself, which, though small, yet with its dark rich fretwork, knightly helmets and banners, and old monumental effigies, seems all filled and overshadowed by the spirit of chivalrous antiquity. The imagination never fails to recognise it as a fitting scene for high solemnities of old—a place to witness the solitary vigil of arms, or to resound with the funeral march at the burial of some warlike king.]

"All the choir
Sang Hallelujah, as the sound of seas."—MILTON.

AGAIN! oh, send that anthem-peal again
Through the arch'd roof in triumph to the sky!
Bid the old tombs ring proudly to the strain,
The banners thrill as if with victory!

* "*Ye myrtles brown, and ivy never sere.*"—*Lycidas.*

Such sounds the warrior awe-struck might have heard,
While arm'd for fields of chivalrous renown:
Such the high hearts of kings might well have stirr'd,
While throbbing still beneath the recent crown!

Those notes once more!—they bear my soul away,
They lend the wings of morning to its flight;
No earthly passion in th' exulting lay
Whispers one tone to win me from that height.

All is of Heaven! Yet wherefore to mine eye
Gush the vain tears unbidden from their source,
Even while the waves of that strong harmony
Roll with my spirit on their sounding course?

Wherefore must rapture its full heart reveal
Thus by the burst of sorrow's token-shower!
—Oh! is it not, that humbly we may feel
Our nature's limit in its proudest hour?

KEENE; OR, LAMENT OF AN IRISH MOTHER OVER HER SON.

[This lament is intended to imitate the peculiar style of the Irish Keenes, many of which are distinguished by a wild and deep pathos, and other characteristics analogous to those of the national music.]

DARKLY the cloud of night comes rolling on;
Darker is thy repose, my fair-hair'd son!
Silent and dark!

There is blood upon the threshold
Whence thy step went forth at morn
Like a dancer's in its fleetness,
O my bright first-born!

At the glad sound of that footstep
My heart within me smiled;—
Thou wert brought me back all silent
On thy bier, my child!

Darkly the cloud of night comes rolling on;
Darker is thy repose, my fair-hair'd son!
Silent and dark!

I thought to see thy children
Laugh on me with thine eyes;
But my sorrow's voice is lonely
Where my life's flower lies.

I shall go to sit beside thee,
Thy kindred's graves among;
I shall hear the tall grass whisper—
I shall not hear it long!

Darkly the cloud of night comes rolling on;
Darker is thy repose, my fair-haired son!
Silent and dark!

And I, too, shall find slumber
With my lost one in the earth;—
Let none light up the ashes
Again on our hearth!

Let the roof go down !—let silence
On the home for ever fall,
Where my boy lay cold, and heard not
His lone mother's call !

Darkly the cloud of night comes rolling on ;
Darker is thy repose, my fair-haired son !
Silent and dark !

FAR AWAY.*

FAR away !—my home is far away,
Where the blue sea laves a mountain-shore ;
In the woods I hear my brothers play,
Midst the flowers my sister sings once more,
Far away !

Far away !—my dreams are far away,
When at midnight stars and shadows reign :
" Gentle child !" my mother seems to say,
" Follow me where home shall smile again,
Far away !"

Far away !—my hope is far away,
Where love's voice young gladness may restore.

* This, and the five following songs, have been set to music of great merit, by J. Zeugheer Herrmann and H. F. Chorley, Esq., and are published in a set by Mr Power, who has given permission for the appearance of the words in this volume.

—O thou dove! now soaring through the day,
Lend me wings to reach that better shore,
Far away!

THE LYRE AND FLOWER.

A LYRE its plaintive sweetness pour'd
Forth on the wild wind's track;
The stormy wanderer jarr'd the chord,
But gave no music back.—
O child of song!
Bear hence to heaven thy fire:
What hopest thou from the reckless throng?
Be not like that lost lyre!
Not like that lyre!
A flower its leaves and odours cast
On a swift-rolling wave;
Th' unheeding torrent darkly pass'd,
And back no treasure gave.—
O heart of love!
Waste not thy precious dower:
Turn to thine only home above!
Be not like that lost flower!
Not like that flower!

SISTER! SINCE I MET THEE LAST.

SISTER! since I met thee last,
O'er thy brow a change hath past.
In the softness of thine eyes,
Deep and still a shadow lies;
From thy voice there thrills a tone
Never to thy childhood known;
Through thy soul a storm hath moved,
—Gentle sister! thou hast loved!

Yes! thy varying cheek hath caught
Hues too bright from troubled thought;
Far along the wandering stream
Thou art follow'd by a dream;
In the woods and valleys lone
Music haunts thee, not thine own:
Wherefore fall thy tears like rain?
—Sister! thou hast loved in vain!

Tell me not the tale, my flower!
On my bosom pour that shower!
Tell me not of kind thoughts wasted;
Tell me not of young hopes blasted;
Wring not forth one burning word,
Let thy heart no more be stirred!
Home alone can give thee rest.
—Weep, sweet sister! on my breast!

THE LONELY BIRD.

From a ruin thou art singing,
O lonely, lonely bird!
The soft blue air is ringing,
By thy summer music stirr'd.
But all is dark and cold beneath,
Where harps no more are heard:
Whence winn'st thou that exulting breath,
O lonely, lonely bird?

Thy song flows richly swelling,
To a triumph of glad sounds,
As from its cavern-dwelling
A stream in glory bounds!
Though the castle-echoes catch no tone
Of human step or word,
Though the fires be quench'd and the feasting done,
O lonely, lonely bird!

How can that flood of gladness
Rush through thy fiery lay,
From the haunted place of sadness,
From the bosom of decay—
While dirge-notes in the breezes moan,
Through the ivy garlands heard,
Come blent with thy rejoicing tone,
O lonely, lonely bird?

There's many a heart, wild singer!
Like thy forsaken tower,
Where joy no more may linger,
Where love hath left his bower:
And there's many a spirit e'en like thee,
To mirth as lightly stirr'd,
Though it soar from ruins in its glee,
O lonely, lonely bird!

DIRGE AT SEA.

SLEEP!—we give thee to the wave,
Red with life-blood from the brave.
Thou shalt find a noble grave.
Fare thee well!

Sleep! thy billowy field is won,
Proudly may the funeral gun,
Midst the hush at set of sun,
Boom thy knell!

Lonely, lonely is thy bed,
Never there may flower be shed,
Marble rear'd, or brother's head
Bow'd to weep.

Yet thy record on the sea,
Borne through battle high and free,
Long the red-cross flag shall be.
Sleep! oh, sleep!

PILGRIM'S SONG TO THE EVENING STAR.

O SOFT star of the west!
Gleaming far,
Thou'rt guiding all things home,
Gentle star!
Thou bring'st from rock and wave
The sea-bird to her nest,
The hunter from the hills,
The fisher back to rest.
Light of a thousand streams,
Gleaming far!
O soft star of the west!
Blessed star!

No bowery roof is mine,
No hearth of love and rest,
Yet guide me to my shrine,
O soft star of the west!
There, there my home shall be,
Heaven's dew shall cool my breast,
When prayer and tear gush free,
O soft star of the west!

O soft star of the west,
Gleaming far!
Thou'rt guiding all things home,
Gentle star!
Shine from thy rosy heaven,
Pour joy on earth and sea!
Shine on, though no sweet eyes
Look forth to watch for me!

Light of a thousand streams,
Gleaming far!
O soft star of the west!
Blessed star!

THE MEETING OF THE SHIPS.

"We take each other by the hand, and we exchange a few words and looks of kindness, and we rejoice together for a few short moments: and then days, months, years intervene, and we see and know nothing of each other."—WASHINGTON IRVING.

Two barks met on the deep mid-sea,
When calms had still'd the tide;
A few bright days of summer glee
There found them side by side.

And voices of the fair and brave
Rose mingling thence in mirth;
And sweetly floated o'er the wave
The melodies of earth.

Moonlight on that lone Indian main
Cloudless and lovely slept;
While dancing step, and festive strain
Each deck in triumph swept.

And hands were link'd, and answering eyes
With kindly meaning shone;
Oh! brief and passing sympathies,
Like leaves together blown!

A little while such joy was cast
Over the deep's repose,
Till the loud singing winds at last
Like trumpet-music rose.

And proudly, freely on their way
The parting vessels bore;
In calm or storm, by rock or bay,
To meet—oh, never more!

Never to blend in victory's cheer,
To aid in hours of woe:
And thus bright spirits mingle here,
Such ties are formed below.

COME AWAY.*

Come away!—the child, where flowers are springing
Round its footsteps, on the mountain-slope,
Hears a glad voice from the upland singing,
Like the skylark's with its tone of hope:
Come away!

Bounding on, with sunny lands before him,
All the wealth of glowing life outspread,
Ere the shadow of a cloud comes o'er him,
By that strain the youth in joy is led:
Come away!

* This song is in the possession of Mr Power, to be set to *music.*

Slowly, sadly, heavy change is falling
O'er the sweetness of the voice within;
Yet its tones, on restless manhood calling,
Urge the hunter still to chase, to win:
Come away!

Come away!—the heart at last forsaken,
Smile by smile, hath proved each hope untrue;
Yet a breath can still those words awaken,
Though to other shores far hence they woo:
Come away!

In the light leaves, in the reed's faint sighing,
In the low, sweet sounds of early spring,
Still their music wanders—till the dying
Hears them pass, as on a spirit's wing:
Come away!

FAIR HELEN OF KIRKCONNEL.

["Fair Helen of Kirkconnel," as she is called in the Scottish Minstrelsy, throwing herself between her betrothed lover and a rival by whom his life was assailed, received a mortal wound, and died in the arms of the former."]

HOLD me upon thy faithful heart,
Keep back my flitting breath;
'Tis early, early to depart,
Beloved!—yet this is death!

Look on me still—let that kind eye
Be the last light I see!

Oh! sad it is in spring to die,
But yet I die for thee!

For thee, my own!—thy stately head
Was never thus to bow:
Give tears when with me love hath fled,
True love, thou know'st it now!

Oh, the free streams look'd bright, where'er
We in our gladness roved;
And the blue skies were very fair,
O friend! because we loved.

Farewell!—I bless thee—live thou on
When this young heart is low!
Surely my blood thy life hath won—
Clasp me once more—I go!

MUSIC FROM SHORE.

A SOUND comes on the rising breeze,
A sweet and lovely sound!
Piercing the tumult of the seas
That wildly dash around.

From land, from sunny land it comes,
From hills with murmuring trees,
From paths by still and happy homes—
That sweet sound on the breeze.

Why should its faint and passing sigh
  Thus bid my quick pulse leap?
No part in earth's glad melody
  Is mine upon the deep.

Yet blessing, blessing on the spot
  Whence those rich breathings flow!
Kind hearts, although they know me not,
  Like mine there beat and glow.

And blessing, from the bark that roams
  O'er solitary seas,
To those that far in happy homes
  Give sweet sounds to the breeze!

---

‡LOOK ON ME WITH THY CLOUDLESS EYES.*

Look on me with thy cloudless eyes,
Truth in their dark transparence lies;
Their sweetness gives me back the tears
And the free trust of early years,
  My gentle child!

The spirit of my infant prayer
Shines in the depths of quiet there;
And home and love once more are mine,
Found in that dewy calm divine,
  My gentle child!

* The songs marked thus ‡ are in the possession of Mr Willis, to be published by him with music.

Oh! heaven is with thee in thy dreams,
Its light by day around thee gleams—
Thy smile hath gifts from vernal skies:
Look on me with thy cloudless eyes,
My gentle child!

IF THOU HAST CRUSH'D A FLOWER.

"Oh, cast thou not
Affection from thee! In this bitter world
Hold to thy heart that only treasure fast;
Watch—guard it—suffer not a breath to dim
The bright gem's purity!"

If thou hast crush'd a flower,
The root may not be blighted;
If thou hast quench'd a lamp,
Once more it may be lighted:
But on thy harp, or on thy lute,
The string which thou hast broken
Shall never in sweet sound again
Give to thy touch a token!

If thou hast loosed a bird
Whose voice of song could cheer thee,
Still, still he may be won
From the skies to warble near thee:
But if upon the troubled sea
Thou hast thrown a gem unheeded,
Hope not that wind or wave will bring
The treasure back when needed.

If thou hast bruised a vine,
The summer's breath is healing,
And its clusters yet may glow
Through the leaves their bloom revealing:
But if thou hast a cup o'erthrown
With a bright draught fill'd—oh! never
Shall earth give back that lavish'd wealth
To cool thy parch'd lip's fever!

The heart is like that cup,
If thou waste the love it bore thee;
And like that jewel gone,
Which the deep will not restore thee;
And like that string of harp or lute
Whence the sweet sound is scatter'd,—
Gently, oh! gently touch the chords,
So soon for ever shatter'd!

---

‡BRIGHTLY HAST THOU FLED.

Brightly, brightly hast thou fled!
Ere one grief had bow'd thy head!
Brightly didst thou part!
With thy young thoughts pure from spot,
With thy fond love wasted not,
With thy bounding heart.

Ne'er by sorrow to be wet,
Calmly smiles thy pale cheek yet,
Ere with dust o'erspread:

Lilies ne'er by tempest blown,
White rose which no stain hath known,
Be about thee shed!

So we give thee to the earth,
And the primrose shall have birth
O'er thy gentle head;
Thou that, like a dewdrop borne
On a sudden breeze of morn,
Brightly thus hast fled!

---

‡ THE BED OF HEATH.

"SOLDIER, awake! the night is past;
Hear'st thou not the bugle's blast?
Feel'st thou not the dayspring's breath?
Rouse thee from thy bed of heath!
Arm, thou bold and strong!

"Soldier! what deep spell hath bound thee?
Fiery steeds are neighing round thee—
Banners to the fresh wind play:
Rise, and arm;—'tis day, 'tis day!
And thou hast slumber'd long."

"Brother! on the heathery lea
Longer yet my sleep must be;
Though the morn of battle rise,
Darkly night rolls o'er my eyes—
Brother, this is death!

" Call me not when bugles sound,
Call me not when wine flows round;
Name me but amidst the brave,
Give me but a soldier's grave—
But my bed of heath!"

---

‡FAIRY SONG.

HAVE ye left the greenwood lone,
Are your steps for ever gone?
Fairy King and Elfin Queen,
Come ye to the sylvan scene,
From your dim and distant shore,
Never more?

Shall the pilgrim never hear
With a thrill of joy and fear,
In the hush of moonlight hours,
Voices from the folded flowers,
Faint, sweet flute-notes as of yore,
Never more?

" Mortal! ne'er shall bowers of earth
Hear again our midnight mirth:
By our brooks and dingles green
Since unhallow'd steps have been,
Ours shall thread the forests hoar
Never more.

" Ne'er on earthborn lily's stem
Will we hang the dewdrop's gem;

Ne'er shall reed or cowslip's head
Quiver to our dancing tread,
By sweet fount or murmuring shore—
Never more!"

---

‡ WHAT WOKE THE BURIED SOUND.

What woke the buried sound that lay
In Memnon's harp of yore?
What spirit on its viewless way
Along the Nile's green shore?
Oh! not the night, and not the storm,
And not the lightning's fire;
But sunlight's torch, the kind, the warm—
This, this awoke the lyre.

What wins the heart's deep chords to pour
Thus music forth on life—
Like a sweet voice prevailing o'er
The truant sounds of strife?
Oh! not the conflict midst the throng,
Not e'en the trumpet's hour;
Love is the gifted and the strong,
To wake that music's power!

---

‡ SONG FOR AN AIR BY HUMMEL.

Oh! if thou wilt not give thine heart,
Give back mine own to me;*

* These two lines are literally translated from the German.

Or bid thine image thence depart,
And leave me lone but free.

Yet no! this mournful love of mine
I will not from me cast;
Let me but dream 'twill win me thine
By its deep truth at last!

Can aught so fond, so faithful, live
Through years without reply?
—Oh! if thy heart thou wilt not give,
Give me a thought, a sigh!

---

‡LOOK ON ME THUS NO MORE.

It is thy pity makes me weep,
My soul was strong before;
Silent, yet strong its griefs to keep
From vainly gushing o'er.
Turn from me, turn those gentle eyes!
In this fond gaze my spirit dies:
Look on me thus no more!

Too late that softness comes to bless,
My heart's glad life is o'er;
It will but break with tenderness,
Which cannot now restore!
The lyre-strings have been jarr'd too long,
Winter hath touch'd the source of song!
Look on me thus no more!

‡SING TO ME, GONDOLIER!

Sing to me, Gondolier!
Sing words from Tasso's lay;
While blue, and still, and clear,
Night seems but softer day.
The gale is gently falling,
As if it paused to hear
Some strain the past recalling—
Sing to me, Gondolier!

"Oh, ask me not to wake
The memory of the brave;
Bid no high numbers break
The silence of the wave.
Gone are the noble-hearted,
Closed the bright pageants here;
And the glad song is departed
From the mournful Gondolier!"

O'ER THE FAR BLUE MOUNTAINS.*

O'er the far blue mountains,
O'er the white sea-foam,
Come, thou long-parted one!
Back to thine home.

When the bright fire shineth,
Sad looks thy place,

* Set to music by the Author's sister.

While the true heart pineth
Missing thy face.

Music is sorrowful
Since thou art gone;
Sisters are mourning thee—
Come to thine own!

Hark! the home-voices call
Back to thy rest;
Come to thy father's hall,
Thy mother's breast!

O'er the far blue mountains,
O'er the white sea-foam,
Come, thou long-parted one!
Back to thine home.

O THOU BREEZE OF SPRING!*

O THOU breeze of spring,
Gladdening sea and shore!
Wake the woods to sing,
Wake my heart no more!
Streams have felt the sighing
Of thy scented wing,
Let each fount replying
Hail thee, breeze of spring!
Once more!

* Set to music by John Lodge Ellerton, Esq.

O'er long-buried flowers
  Passing not in vain,
Odours in soft showers
  Thou hast brought again.
Let the primrose greet thee,
  Let the violet pour
Incense forth to meet thee—
  Wake my heart no more!
    No more!

From a funeral urn
  Bower'd in leafy gloom,
Even *thy* soft return
  Calls not song or bloom.
Leave my spirit sleeping
  Like that silent thing;
Stir the founts of weeping
  There, O breeze of spring!
    No more!

COME TO ME, DREAMS OF HEAVEN!

Come to me, dreams of heaven!
  My fainting spirit bear
On your bright wings, by morning given,
  Up to celestial air.
Away—far, far away,
  From bowers by tempests riven,
Fold me in blue, still, cloudless day,
  O blessed dreams of heaven!

Come but for one brief hour,
  Sweet dreams! and yet again
O'er burning thought and memory shower
  Your soft effacing rain!
Waft me where gales divine,
  With dark clouds ne'er have striven,
Where living founts for ever shine—
  O blessed dreams of heaven! *

GOOD-NIGHT. †

Day is past!
Stars have set their watch at last;
Founts that through the deep woods flow
Make sweet sounds, unheard till now;
Flowers have shut with fading light—
  Good-night!

Go to rest!
Sleep sit dove-like on thy breast!
If within that secret cell
One dark form of memory dwell,
Be it mantled from thy sight—
  Good-night!

Joy be thine!
Kind looks o'er thy slumbers shine!
Go, and in the spirit-land
Meet thy home's long-parted band;

* Set to music by Miss Graves.
† For a melody of Eisenhofer's.

Be their eyes all love and light—
Good-night!

Peace to all!
Dreams of heaven on mourners fall!
Exile! o'er thy couch may gleams
Pass from thine own mountain-streams;
Bard! away to worlds more bright—
Good-night!

LET HER DEPART.

Her home is far, oh! far away!
The clear light in her eyes
Hath naught to do with earthly day—
'Tis kindled from the skies.
Let her depart!

She looks upon the things of earth,
Even as some gentle star
Seems gazing down on grief or mirth,
How softly, yet how far!
Let her depart!

Her spirit's hope—her bosom's love—
Oh! could they mount and fly!
She never sees a wandering dove,
But for its wings to sigh.
Let her depart!

She never hears a soft wind bear
  Low music on its way,
But deems it sent from heavenly air
  For her who cannot stay.
    Let her depart!

Wrapt in a cloud of glorious dreams,
  She breathes and moves alone,
Pining for those bright bowers and streams
  Where her beloved is gone.
    Let her depart!

HOW CAN THAT LOVE SO DEEP, SO LONE.

How can that love so deep, so lone,
  So faithful unto death,
Thus fitfully in laughing tone,
  In airy word, find breath?

Nay! ask how on the dark wave's breast,
  The lily's cup may gleam,
Though many a mournful secret rest
  Low in the unfathom'd stream.

That stream is like my hidden love,
  In its deep current's power;
And like the play of words above,
  That lily's trembling flower.

WATER-LILIES.

A FAIRY SONG.

Come away, elves!—while the dew is sweet,
Come to the dingles where fairies meet;
Know that the lilies have spread their bells
O'er all the pools in our forest dells;
Stilly and lightly their vases rest
On the quivering sleep of the water's breast,
Catching the sunshine through leaves that throw
To their scented bosoms an emerald glow;
And a star from the depth of each pearly cup,
A golden star unto heaven looks up,
As if seeking its kindred where bright they lie,
Set in the blue of the summer sky.
Come away! Under arching boughs we'll float,
Making those urns each a fairy boat;
We'll row them with reeds o'er the fountains free,
And a tall flag-leaf shall our streamer be;
And we'll send out wild music so sweet and low,
It shall seem from the bright flower's heart to flow,
As if 'twere a breeze with a flute's low sigh,
Or water-drops train'd into melody.
Come away! for the midsummer sun grows strong,
And the life of the lily may not be long.

‡ THE BROKEN FLOWER.

Oh! wear it on thy heart, my love!
Still, still a little while!
Sweetness is lingering in its leaves,
Though faded be their smile.
Yet, for the sake of what hath been,
Oh, cast it not away!
'Twas born to grace a summer scene,
A long, bright, golden day,
My love!
A long, bright, golden day!

A little while around thee, love!
Its fragrance yet shall cling,
Telling, that on thy heart hath lain
A fair, though faded thing.
But not even that warm heart hath power
To win it back from fate,—
Oh! *I* am like thy broken flower,
Cherish'd too late, too late,
My love!
Cherish'd, alas! too late!

---

‡ I WOULD WE HAD NOT MET AGAIN.

I would we had not met again!
I had a dream of thee,
Lovely, though sad, on desert-plain—
Mournful on midnight sea.

What though it haunted me by night,
And troubled through the day?
It touched all earth with spirit-light,
It glorified my way!

Oh! what shall now my faith restore
In holy things and fair?
We met—I saw thy soul once more—
The world's breath had been there!

Yes! it was sad on desert-plain,
Mournful on midnight sea;
Yet would I buy with life again
That one deep dream of thee!

FAIRIES' RECALL.

While the blue is richest
In the starry sky,
While the softest shadows
On the greensward lie,
While the moonlight slumbers
In the lily's urn,
Bright elves of the wild wood!
Oh! return, return!

Round the forest-fountain,
On the river-shore,
Let your silvery laughter
Echo yet once more;

While the joyous bounding
Of your dewy feet
Rings to that old chorus—
"The daisy is so sweet!"*

Oberon! Titania!
Did your starlight mirth
With the song of Avon
Quit this work-day earth?
Yet, while green leaves glisten,
And while bright stars burn,
By that magic memory,
Oh! return, return!

THE ROCK BESIDE THE SEA.

Oh! tell me not the woods are fair
Now spring is on her way!
Well, well I know how brightly there
In joy the young leaves play;
How sweet on winds of morn or eve
The violet's breath may be;—
Yet ask me, woo me not to leave
My lone rock by the sea.

The wild wave's thunder on the shore,
The curlew's restless cries,
Unto my watching heart are more
Than all earth's melodies.

* See the fairies' chorus in Chaucer's "Flower and the Leaf."

Come back, my ocean rover! come!
There's but one place for me,
Till I can greet thy swift sail home—
My lone rock by the sea!

O YE VOICES GONE! *

Oh! ye voices gone!
Sounds of other years!
Hush that haunting tone,
Melt me not to tears!

All around forget,
All who loved you well;
Yet, sweet voices! yet
O'er my soul ye swell.

With the winds of spring,
With the breath of flowers,
Floating back, ye bring
Thoughts of vanish'd hours.

Hence your music take,
O ye voices gone!
This lone heart ye make
But more deeply lone.

* Set to music by Miss H. Corbett.

‡ BY A MOUNTAIN STREAM AT REST.

By a mountain stream at rest,
We found the warrior lying,
And around his noble breast
A banner clasp'd in dying:
Dark and still
Was every hill,
And the winds of night were sighing.

Last of his noble race,
To a lonely bed we bore him—
'Twas a green, still, solemn place,
Where the mountain-heath waves o'er him:
Woods alone
Seem to moan,
Wild streams to deplore him.

Yet, from festive hall and lay
Our sad thoughts oft are flying
To those dark hills far away,
Where in death we found him lying—
On his breast
A banner press'd,
And the night-wind o'er him sighing.

---

‡ IS THERE SOME SPIRIT SIGHING.

Is there some Spirit sighing
With sorrow in the air?

Can weary hearts be dying,
  Vain love repining *there* ?
If not, then how can that wild wail,
  O sad Æolian lyre !
Be drawn forth by the wandering gale
  From thy deep-thrilling wire ?

No, no !—thou dost not borrow
  That sadness from the wind,
Nor are those tones of sorrow
  In thee, O harp ! enshrined ;
But in our own hearts deeply set
  Lies the true quivering lyre,
Whence love, and memory, and regret
  Wake answers from thy wire.

THE NAME OF ENGLAND.

The trumpet of the battle
  Hath a high and thrilling tone ;
And the first deep gun of an ocean-fight
  Dread music all its own.

But a mightier power, my England !
  Is in that name of thine,
To strike the fire from every heart
  Along the banner'd line.

Proudly it woke the spirits
  Of yore, the brave and true,

When the bow was bent on Cressy's field,
And the yeoman's arrow flew.

And proudly hath it floated
Through the battles of the sea,
When the red-cross flag o'er smoke-wreaths play'd,
Like the lightning in its glee.

On rock, on wave, on bastion,
Its echoes have been known;
By a thousand streams the hearts lie low
That have answer'd to its tone.

A thousand ancient mountains
Its pealing note hath stirr'd,—
Sound on, and on, for evermore,
O thou victorious word!

OLD NORWAY.*

A MOUNTAIN WAR-SONG.

["To a Norwegian the words *Gamlé Norgé* (Old Norway) have a spell in them immediate and powerful: they cannot be resisted. *Gamlé Norgé* is heard in an instant repeated by every voice; the glasses are filled, raised, and drained—not a drop is left; and then bursts forth the simultaneous chorus '*For Norgé!*' the national song of Norway. Here (at Christiansand), and in a hundred other instances in Norway, I have seen the character of a company entirely changed by the

* These words have been published, as arranged to the spirited national air of Norway, by Charles Graves, Esq.

chance introduction of the expression *Gamlé Norgé*. The gravest discussion is instantly interrupted, and one might suppose for the moment that the party was a party of patriots assembled to commemorate some national anniversary of freedom."—DERWENT CONWAY'S *Personal Narrative of a Journey through Norway and Sweden.*

The following words were written to the national air, as contained in the work above cited.]

ARISE! old Norway sends the word
Of battle on the blast;
Her voice the forest pines hath stirr'd,
As if a storm went past;
Her thousand hills the call have heard,
And forth their fire-flags cast.

Arm, arm, free hunters! for the chase,
The kingly chase of foes!
'Tis not the bear or wild wolf's race
Whose trampling shakes the snows:
Arm, arm! 'tis on a nobler trace
The northern spearman goes.

Our hills have dark and strong defiles,
With many an icy bed;
Heap there the rocks for funeral piles,
Above the invader's head!
Or let the seas, that guard our isles,
Give burial to his dead!

‡ COME TO ME, GENTLE SLEEP!

Come to me, gentle Sleep!
I pine, I pine for thee;
Come with thy spells, the soft, the deep,
And set my spirit free!
Each lonely, burning thought
In twilight languor steep—
Come to the full heart, long o'erwrought,
O gentle, gentle Sleep!

Come with thine urn of dew,
Sleep, gentle Sleep! yet bring
No voice, love's yearning to renew,
No vision on thy wing!
Come, as to folding flowers,
To birds in forests deep—
Long, dark, and dreamless be thine hours,
O gentle, gentle Sleep!

THE LEAGUE OF THE ALPS;

OR,

THE MEETING ON THE FIELD OF GRUTLI.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

[It was in the year 1308 that the Swiss rose against the tyranny of the bailiffs appointed over them by Albert of Austria. The field called the Grutli, at the foot of the Seelisberg, and near the boundaries of Uri and Unterwalden, was fixed upon by three spirited yeomen, Walter Furst (the father-in-law of William Tell), Werner Stauffacher, and Erni (or Arnold) Melchthal, as their place of meeting to deliberate on the accomplishment of their projects.

" Hither came Furst and Melchthal, along secret paths over the heights, and Stauffacher in his boat across the Lake of the Four Cantons. On the night preceding the 11th of November 1307, they met here, each with ten associates, men of approved worth; and while at this solemn hour they were wrapt in the contemplation that on their success depended the fate of

* In point of chronology this poem should have followed " The Vespers of Palermo" and " Songs of the Cid." Having been inadvertently omitted in its proper place, it is here inserted between the " Songs for Music " and the " Scenes and Hymns of Life," in order more strikingly to exhibit the changes in style and habits of thought apparent between the earlier and later compositions of Mrs Hemans.

their whole posterity, Werner, Walter, and Arnold held up their hands to Heaven, and in the name of the Almighty, who has created man to an inalienable degree of freedom, swore jointly and strenuously to defend that freedom. The thirty associates heard the oath with awe; and with uplifted hands attested the same God, and all his saints, that they were firmly bent on offering up their lives for the defence of their injured liberty. They then calmly agreed on their future proceedings, and for the present each returned to his hamlet."—PLANTA'S *History of the Helvetic Confederacy.*

On the first day of the year 1308, they succeeded in throwing off the Austrian yoke; and "it is well attested," says the same author, "that not one drop of blood was shed on this memorable occasion, nor had one proprietor to lament the loss of a claim, a privilege, or an inch of land. The Swiss met on the succeeding Sabbath, and once more confirmed by oath their ancient, and (as they fondly named it) their perpetual league."]

I.

'Twas night upon the Alps. The Senn's wild horn,[1]
Like a wind's voice, had pour'd its last long tone,
Whose pealing echoes, through the larch-woods borne,
To the low cabins of the glens made known
That welcome steps were nigh. The flocks had gone
By cliff and pine-bridge to their place of rest;
The chamois slumber'd, for the chase was done
His cavern-bed of moss the hunter press'd,
And the rock-eagle couch'd high on his cloudy nest.

II.

Did the land sleep? The woodman's axe had ceased
Its ringing notes upon the beech and plane;
The grapes were gather'd in; the vintage feast
Was closed upon the hills, the reaper's strain
Hush'd by the streams; the year was in its wane,
The night in its mid-watch—it was a time
E'en mark'd and hallow'd unto slumber's reign;
But thoughts were stirring, restless and sublime,
And o'er his white Alps moved the spirit of the clime.

III.

For there, where snows, in crowning glory spread,
High and unmark'd by mortal footstep lay;
And there, where torrents, mid the ice-caves fed,
Burst in their joy of light and sound away;
And there, where freedom, as in scornful play,
Had hung man's dwellings midst the realms of air,
O'er cliffs the very birthplace of the day—
Oh! who would dream that tyranny could dare
To lay her withering hand on God's bright works e'en there!

IV.

Yet thus it was. Amidst the fleet streams gushing
To bring down rainbows o'er their sparry cell,
And the glad heights, through mist and tempest rushing
Up where the sun's red fire-glance earliest fell,
And the fresh pastures where the herd's sweet bell

Recall'd such life as Eastern patriarchs led ;
There peasant men their free thoughts might not tell
Save in the hour of shadows and of dread,
And hollow sounds that wake to Guilt's dull stealthy tread.

V.

But in a land of happy shepherd-homes,
On its green hills in quiet joy reclining,
With their bright hearth-fires midst the twilight glooms,
From bowery lattice through the fir-woods shining—
A land of legends, and wild songs entwining
Their memory with all memories loved and blest—
In such a land there dwells a power, combining
The strength of many a calm but fearless breast ;
And woe to him who breaks the Sabbath of its rest !

VI.

A sound went up—the wave's dark sleep was broken—
On Uri's lake was heard a midnight oar—
Of man's brief course a troubled moment's token
Th' eternal waters to their barriers bore ;
And then their gloom a flashing image wore
Of torch-fires streaming out o'er crag and wood,
And the wild falcon's wing was heard to soar
In startled haste—and by that moonlight flood
A band of patriot men on Grutli's verdure stood.

VII.

They stood in arms: the wolf-spear and the bow
Had waged their war on things of mountain race;
Might not their swift stroke reach a mail-clad foe?
Strong hands in harvest, daring feet in chase,
True hearts in fight, were gather'd on that place
Of secret council. Not for fame or spoil
So met those men in Heaven's majestic face:
To guard free hearths they rose, the sons of toil,
The hunter of the rocks, the tiller of the soil.

VIII.

O'er their low pastoral valleys might the tide
Of years have flow'd, and still, from sire to son,
Their names and records on the green earth died,
As cottage lamps, expiring one by one
In the dim glades, when midnight hath begun
To hush all sound. But silent on its height,
The snow-mass, full of death, while ages run
Their course, may slumber, bathed in rosy light,
Till some rash voice or step disturb its brooding might.

IX.

So were *they* roused. Th' invading step had pass'd
Their cabin thresholds, and the lowly door,
Which well had stood against the Fohnwind's blast,[2]
Could bar Oppression from their home no more.
Why, what had *she* to do where all things wore
Wild grandeur's impress? In the storm's free way,

How dared *she* lift her pageant crest before
Th' enduring and magnificent array
Of sovereign Alps, that wing'd their eagles with the day?

X.

This might not long be borne: the tameless hills
Have voices from the cave and cataract swelling,
Fraught with His name, whose awful presence fills
Their deep lone places, and for ever telling
That He hath made man free! and they, whose dwelling
Was in those ancient fastnesses, gave ear;
The weight of sufferance from their hearts repelling,
They rose—the forester—the mountaineer—
Oh! what hath earth more strong than the good peasant-spear?

XI.

Sacred be Grutli's field! Their vigil keeping
Through many a blue and starry summer night—
There, while the sons of happier lands were sleeping,
Had those brave Switzers met; and in the sight
Of the just God, who pours forth burning might
To gird the oppress'd, had given their deep thoughts way,
And braced their spirits for the patriot fight,
With lovely images of homes that lay
Bower'd midst the rustling pines, or by the torrent spray.

XII.

Now had endurance reach'd its bounds! They came
With courage set in each bright earnest eye,
The day, the signal, and the hour to name,
When they should gather on their hills to die,
Or shake the glaciers with their joyous cry
For the land's freedom. 'Twas a scene combining
All glory in itself—the solemn sky,
The stars, the waves their soften'd light enshrining,
And man's high soul supreme o'er mighty Nature shining.

XIII.

Calmly they stood, and with collected mien,
Breathing their souls in voices firm but low —
As if the spirit of the hour and scene,
With the woods' whisper and the waves' sweet flow,
Had temper'd in their thoughtful hearts the glow
Of all indignant feeling. To the breath
Of Dorian flute, and lyre-note soft and slow,
E'en thus of old, the Spartan from its sheath
Drew his devoted sword, and girt himself for death.

XIV.

And three, that seem'd as chieftains of the band,
Were gather'd in the midst on that lone shore
By Uri's lake. A father of the land,[8]
One on his brow the silent record wore
Of many days, whose shadows had pass'd o'er

His path among the hills, and quench'd the dreams
Of youth with sorrow.—Yet from memory's lore
Still his life's evening drew its loveliest gleams,
For he had walk'd with God, beside the mountain-streams.

XV.

And his grey hairs, in happier times, might well
To their last pillow silently have gone,
As melts a wreath of snow. But who shall tell
How life may task the spirit? He was one
Who from its morn a freeman's work had done,
And reap'd his harvest, and his vintage press'd,
Fearless of wrong; and now, at set of sun,
He bow'd not to his years, for on the breast
Of a still chainless land he deemed it much to rest.

XVI.

But for such holy rest strong hands must toil,
Strong hearts endure! By that pale elder's side,
Stood one that seem'd a monarch of the soil,
Serene and stately in his manhood's pride—
Werner,[4] the brave and true! If men have died,
Their hearths and shrines inviolate to keep,
He was a mate for such. The voice that cried
Within his breast, "Arise!" came still and deep
From his far home, that smiled e'en then in moon-light sleep.

XVII.

It was a home to die for, as it rose
Through its vine foliage, sending forth a sound
Of mirthful childhood, o'er the green repose

And laughing sunshine of the pastures round;
And he, whose life to that sweet spot was bound,
Raised unto Heaven a glad yet thoughtful eye,
And set his free step firmer on the ground,
When o'er his soul its melodies went by
As, through some Alpine pass, a breeze of Italy.

XVIII.

But who was he that on his hunting-spear
Lean'd with a prouder and more fiery bearing?
His was a brow for tyrant hearts to fear,
Within the shadow of its dark locks wearing
That which they may not tame—a soul declaring
War against earth's oppressors. Midst that throng,
Of other mould he seem'd, and loftier daring,
One whose blood swept high impulses along,
One that should pass, and leave a name for warlike song—

XIX.

A memory on the mountains!—one to stand,
When the hills echoed with the deepening swell
Of hostile trumpets, foremost for the land,
And in some rock defile, or savage dell,
Array her peasant-children to repel
Th' invader, sending arrows for his chains!
Ay, one to fold around him, as he fell,
Her banner with a smile—for through his veins
The joy of danger flow'd, as torrents to the plains.

XX.

There was at times a wildness in the light
Of his quick-flashing eye; a something, born

Of the free Alps, and beautifully bright,
And proud, and tameless, laughing fear to scorn!
It well might be!—Young Erni's step had worn[5]
The mantling snows on their most regal steeps,
And track'd the lynx above the clouds of morn,
And follow'd where the flying chamois leaps
Across the dark-blue rifts, th' unfathomed glacier deeps.

XXI.

He was a creature of the Alpine sky,
A being whose bright spirit had been fed
Midst the crown'd heights of joy and liberty,
And thoughts of power. He knew each path which led
To the rock's treasure-caves, whose crystal shed
Soft light o'er secret fountains. At the tone
Of his loud horn the Lammer-Geyer[6] had spread
A startled wing; for oft that peal had blown
Where the free cataract's voice was wont to sound alone.

XXII.

His step had track'd the waste, his soul had stirr'd
The ancient solitudes—his voice had told
Of wrongs to call down Heaven.[7] That tale was heard
In Hasli's dales, and where the shepherds fold
Their flocks in dark ravine and craggy hold
On the bleak Oberland; and where the light
Of day's last footsteps bathes in burning gold
Great Righi's cliffs; and where Mount Pilate's height
Casts o'er his glassy lake the darkness of his might.

XXIII.

Nor was it heard in vain. There all things press
High thoughts on man. The fearless hunter pass'd,
And, from the bosom of the wilderness,
There leapt a spirit and a power to cast
The weight of bondage down—and bright and fast,
As the clear waters, joyously and free,
Burst from the desert rock, it rush'd at last
Through the far valleys; till the patriot three
Thus with their brethren stood, beside the Forest Sea.[8]

XXIV.

They link'd their hands, they pledged their stainless faith
In the dread presence of attesting Heaven,
They bound their hearts to suffering and to death,
With the severe and solemn transport given
To bless such vows. How nobly man had striven,
How man *might* strive, and vainly strive, they knew.
And call'd upon their God, whose arm had riven
The crest of many a tyrant, since He blew
The foaming sea-wave on, and Egypt's might o'erthrew.

XXV.

They knelt, and rose in strength. The valleys lay
Still in their dimness, but the peaks which darted
Into the bright mid-air, had caught from day
A flush of fire, when those true Switzers parted,
Each to his glen or forest, steadfast-hearted,

And full of hope. Not many suns had worn
Their setting glory, ere from slumber started
Ten thousand voices, of the mountains born—
So far was heard the blast of freedom's echoing horn!

XXVI.

The ice-vaults trembled, when that peal came rending
The frozen stillness which around them hung;
From cliff to cliff the avalanche descending,
Gave answer, till the sky's blue hollow rung;
And the flame-signals through the midnight sprung
From the Surennen rocks, like banners streaming
To the far Seelisberg; whence light was flung
On Grutli's field, till all the red lake gleaming,
Shone out, a meteor-heaven in its wild splendour seeming.

XXVII.

And the winds toss'd each summit's blazing crest,
As a host's plumage; and the giant pines,
Fell'd where they waved o'er crag and eagle's nest,
Heap'd up the flames. The clouds grew fiery signs,
As o'er a city's burning towers and shrines,
Reddening the distance. Wine-cups, crown'd and bright,
In Werner's dwelling flow'd; through leafless vines
From Walter's hearth stream'd forth the festive light,
And Erni's blind old sire gave thanks to Heaven that night.

XXVIII.

Then on the silence of the snows there lay
A Sabbath's quiet sunshine—and its bell
Fill'd the hush'd air awhile, with lonely sway;
For the stream's voice was chain'd by winter's spell.
The deep wood-sounds had ceased. But rock and dell
Rung forth, ere long, when strains of jubilee
Peal'd from the mountain-churches, with a swell
Of praise to Him who stills the raging sea—
For now the strife was closed, the glorious Alps were free!

NOTES.

Note 1, page 103, line 1.

The Senn's wild horn.

Senn, the name given to a herdsman among the Swiss Alps.

Note 2, page 106, line 21.

Against the Fohnwind's blast.

Fohnwind, the south-east wind, which frequently lays waste the country before it.

Note 3, page 108, line 21.

A father of the land.

Walter Furst, the father-in-law of Tell.

Note 4, page 109, line 18.

Werner, the brave and true, &c.

Werner Stauffacher, who had been urged by his wife to rouse and unite his countrymen for the deliverance of Switzerland.

Note 5, page 111, line 3.

Young Erni's step had worn, &c.

Erni, Arnold Melchthal.

Note 6, page 111, line 14.

The Lammer-Geyer had spread, &c.

The Lammer-Geyer, the largest kind of Alpine eagle.

Note 7, page 111, line 19.

Of wrongs to call down Heaven, &c.

The eyes of his aged father had been put out by the orders of the Austrian Governor.

Note 8, page 112, line 9.

Beside the Forest Sea.

Forest Sea—the Lake of the Four Cantons is frequently so called.

SCENES AND HYMNS OF LIFE,

WITH OTHER

RELIGIOUS POEMS.

TO

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, Esq.

IN TOKEN OF DEEP RESPECT

FOR HIS CHARACTER, AND FERVENT GRATITUDE

FOR MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL BENEFIT

DERIVED FROM REVERENTIAL COMMUNION

WITH THE SPIRIT OF HIS POETRY,

THIS VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY

FELICIA HEMANS.

PREFACE.

I TRUST I shall not be accused of presumption for the endeavour which I have here made to enlarge, in some degree, the sphere of religious poetry, by associating with its themes more of the emotions, the affections, and even the purer imaginative enjoyments of daily life, than may have been hitherto admitted within the hallowed circle.

It has been my wish to portray the religious spirit, not alone in its meditative joys and solitary aspirations (the poetic embodying of which seems to require from the reader a state of mind already separated and exalted), but likewise in those active influences upon human life, so often called into victorious energy by trial and conflict, though too often also, like the upward-striving flame of a mountain watch-fire, borne down by tempest-showers, or swayed by the current of opposing winds.

I have sought to represent that spirit as penetrating the gloom of the prison and the deathbed, bearing "healing on its wings" to the agony of parting love—strengthening the heart of the wayfarer for "perils in the wilderness"—gladdening the domestic walk through field and woodland—and springing to life in the soul of childhood, along with its earliest rejoicing perceptions of natural beauty.

Circumstances not altogether under my own control have, for the present, interfered to prevent the fuller development of a plan which I yet hope more worthily to mature; and I lay this little volume before the public with that deep sense of deficiency which cannot be more impressively taught to human powers, than by their reverential application to things divine.

F. H.

1834.

THE ENGLISH MARTYRS;

A SCENE OF THE DAYS OF QUEEN MARY.

> "Thy face
> Is all at once spread over with a calm
> More beautiful than sleep, or mirth, or joy!
> I am no more disconsolate."
>
> WILSON.

SCENE I.—*A Prison.*

EDITH *alone.*

Edith. Morn once again! Morn in the lone, dim cell,
The cavern of the prisoner's fever-dream;
And morn on all the green, rejoicing hills,
And the bright waters round the prisoner's home,
Far, far away! Now wakes the early bird,
That in the lime's transparent foliage sings,
Close to my cottage lattice—he awakes,
To stir the young leaves with his gushing soul,
And to call forth rich answers of delight
From voices buried in a thousand trees
Through the dim, starry hours. Now doth the lake
Darken and flash in rapid interchange
Unto the matin breeze; and the blue mist
Rolls, like a furling banner, from the brows

Of the forth-gleaming hills and woods that rise
As if new-born. Bright world! and I am here!
And thou, O thou! the awakening thought of whom
Was more than dayspring, dearer than the sun,
Herbert! the very glance of whose clear eye
Made my soul melt away to one pure fount
Of living, bounding gladness!—where art *thou?*
My friend! my only and my blessed love!
Herbert, my soul's companion!

[GOMEZ, *a Spanish Priest, enters.*

Gom. Daughter, hail!
I bring thee tidings.

Ed. Heaven will aid my soul
Calmly to meet whate'er thy lips announce.

Gom. Nay, lift a song of thanksgiving to Heaven,
And bow thy knee down for deliverance won!
Hast thou not pray'd for life? and wouldst thou not
Once more be free?

Ed. Have I not pray'd for life?
I, that am so beloved! that love again
With such a heart of tendrils? Heaven! *thou* know'st
The gushings of my prayer! And would I not
Once more be free? I that have been a child
Of breezy hills, a playmate of the fawn
In ancient woodlands from mine infancy!
A watcher of the clouds and of the stars,
Beneath the adoring silence of the night;
And a glad wanderer with the happy streams,
Whose laughter fills the mountains! Oh! to hear
Their blessed sounds again!

Gom. Rejoice, rejoice!
Our Queen hath pity, maiden! on thy youth;
She wills not thou shouldst perish. I am come
To loose thy bonds.
Ed. And shall I see *his* face,
And shall I listen to *his* voice again,
And lay my head upon his faithful breast,
Weeping there in my gladness? *Will* this be?
Blessings upon thee, father! my quick heart
Hath deem'd thee stern—say, wilt thou not forgive
The wayward child, too long in sunshine rear'd—
Too long unused to chastening? Wilt thou not?
But Herbert, Herbert! Oh, my soul hath rush'd
On a swift gust of sudden joy away,
Forgetting all beside! Speak, father! speak!
Herbert—is he, too, free?
Gom. His freedom lies
In his own choice—a boon like thine.
Ed. Thy words
Fall changed and cold upon my boding heart.
Leave not this dim suspense o'ershadowing me;
Let all be told.
Gom. The monarchs of the earth
Shower not their mighty gifts without a claim
Unto some token of true vassalage,
Some mark of homage.
Ed. Oh! unlike to *Him*
Who freely pours the joy of sunshine forth,
And the bright, quickening rain, on those who serve
And those who heed him not!
Gom. (*laying a paper before her.*) Is it so much
That thine own hand should set the crowning seal

To thy deliverance? Look, thy task is here!
Sign but these words for liberty and life.
Ed. (*examining and then throwing it from her.*)
Sign but these words! and wherefore saidst thou not
—"Be but a traitor to God's light within?"
Cruel, oh cruel! thy dark sport hath been
With a young bosom's hope! Farewell, glad life!
Bright opening path to love and home, farewell!
And thou—now leave me with my God alone!
Gom. Dost thou reject Heaven's mercy?
Ed. Heaven's! doth *Heaven*
Woo the free spirit for dishonour'd breath
To sell its birthright?—doth *Heaven* set a price
On the clear jewel of unsullied faith,
And the bright calm of conscience? Priest, away!
God hath been with me midst the holiness
Of England's mountains. Not in sport alone
I trod their heath-flowers; but high thoughts rose up
From the broad shadow of the enduring rocks,
And wandered with me into solemn glens,
Where my soul felt the beauty of his word.
I have heard voices of immortal truth,
Blent with the everlasting torrent-sounds
That make the deep hills tremble.—Shall I quail?
Shall England's daughter sink? No! He who there
Spoke to my heart in silence and in storm,
Will not forsake His child!
Gom. (*turning from her.*) Then perish! lost
In thine own blindness!

Ed. (*suddenly throwing herself at his feet.*)
Father! hear me yet!
Oh! if the kindly touch of human love
Hath ever warm'd thy breast——
Gom. Away—away!
I know not love.
Ed. Yet hear! if thou hast known
The tender sweetness of a mother's voice—
If the true vigil of affection's eye
Hath watched thy childhood—if fond tears have e'er
Been showered upon thy head—if parting words
E'er pierced thy spirit with their tenderness—
Let me but look upon *his* face once more,
Let me but say—Farewell, my soul's beloved!
And I will bless thee still!
Gom. (*aside.*) Her soul may yield,
Beholding him in fetters; woman's faith
Will bend to woman's love.
Thy prayer is heard;
Follow, and I will guide thee to his cell.
Ed. Oh! stormy hour of agony and joy!
But I shall see him—I shall hear his voice!
[*They go out.*

SCENE II.—*Another part of the Prison.*

HERBERT, EDITH.

Ed. Herbert! my Herbert! is it thus we meet?
Her. The voice of my own Edith! Can such joy
Light up this place of death! And do I feel
Thy breath of love once more upon my cheek,

And the soft floating of thy gleamy hair,
My blessed Edith? Oh, so pale! so changed!
My flower, my blighted flower! thou that wert made
For the kind fostering of sweet, summer airs,
How hath the storm been with thee? Lay thy head
On this true breast again, my gentle one!
And tell me all.

Ed. Yes! take me to thy heart,
For I am weary, weary! Oh! that heart!
The kind, the brave, the tender!—how my soul
Hath sicken'd in vain yearnings for the balm
Of rest on that warm heart!—full, deep repose!
One draught of dewy stillness after storm!
And God hath pitied me, and I am here—
Yet once before I die.

Her. They *cannot* slay
One young, and meek, and beautiful as thou,
My broken lily! Surely the long days
Of the dark cell have been enough for *thee!*
Oh! thou shalt live, and raise thy gracious head
Yet in calm sunshine.

Ed. Herbert, I have cast
The snare of proffer'd mercy from my soul,
This very hour. God to the weak hath given
Victory o'er life and death. The tempter's price
Hath been rejected—Herbert, I must die.

Her. O Edith! Edith! I, that led thee first
From the old path wherein thy fathers trod—
I, that received it as an angel's task,
To pour the fresh light on thine ardent soul,
Which drank it as a sunflower—*I* have been
Thy guide to death.

Ed. To heaven! my guide to heaven,
My noble and my blessed. O! look up,
Be strong, rejoice, my Herbert! But for *thee*,
How could my spirit have sprung up to God
Through the dark cloud which o'er its vision hung,
The night of fear and error?—thy dear hand
First raised that veil, and show'd the glorious world
My heritage beyond. Friend! love, and friend!
It was as if thou gavest me mine own soul
In those bright days! Yes! a new earth and heaven,
And a new sense for all their splendours born—
These were thy gifts; and shall I not rejoice
To die, upholding their immortal worth,
Even for *thy* sake? Yes! filled with nobler life
By thy pure love, made holy to the truth,
Lay me upon the altar of thy God,
The first fruits of thy ministry below—
Thy work, thine own!

Her. My love, my sainted love!
Oh! I *can* almost yield thee unto heaven;
Earth would but sully thee! Thou must depart,
With the rich crown of thy celestial gifts
Untainted by a breath. And yet, alas!
Edith! what dreams of holy happiness,
Even for *this* world, were ours!—the low sweet home,
The pastoral dwelling, with its ivied porch,
And lattice gleaming through the leaves—and thou
My life's companion! Thou, beside my hearth,
Sitting with thy meek eyes, or greeting me
Back from brief absence with thy bounding step,
In the green meadow-path, or by my side
Kneeling—thy calm uplifted face to mine,

In the sweet hush of prayer! and now—oh, now!—
How have we loved—how fervently! how long!
And this to be the close!
Ed. Oh! bear me up
Against the unutterable tenderness
Of earthly love, my God!—in the sick hour
Of dying human hope, forsake me not!
Herbert, my Herbert! even from that sweet home
Where it had been too much of Paradise
To dwell with thee—even thence the oppressor's hand
Might soon have torn us; or the touch of death
Might one day there have left a widow'd heart
Pining alone. We will go hence, beloved!
To the bright country where the wicked cease
From troubling, where the spoiler hath no sway;
Where no harsh voice of worldliness disturbs
The Sabbath-peace of love. We will go hence,
Together with our wedded souls, to heaven:
No solitary lingering, no cold void,
No dying of the heart! Our lives have been
Lovely through faithful love, and in our deaths
We will not be divided.
Her. Oh! the peace
Of God is lying far within thine eyes,
Far underneath the mist of human tears
Lighting those blue, still depths, and sinking thence
On my worn heart. Now am I girt with strength,
Now I can bless thee, my true bride for Heaven!
Ed. And let me bless *thee*, Herbert!—in this hour
Let my soul bless thee with prevailing might!
Oh! thou hast loved me nobly! thou didst take
An orphan to thy heart—a thing unprized

And desolate; and thou didst guard her there,
That lone and lowly creature, as a pearl
Of richest price; and thou didst fill her soul
With the high gifts of an immortal wealth.
I bless, I bless thee! Never did thine eye
Look on me but in glistening tenderness,
My gentle Herbert! Never did thy voice
But in affection's deepest music speak
To thy poor Edith! Never was thy heart
Aught but the kindliest sheltering home to mine,
My faithful, generous Herbert! Woman's peace
Ne'er on a breast so tender and so true
Reposed before. Alas! thy showering tears
Fall fast upon my cheek—forgive, forgive!
I should not melt thy noble strength away
In such an hour.

Her. Sweet Edith, no! my heart
Will fail no more. God bears me up through thee,
And by thy words, and by the heavenly light
Shining around thee, through thy very tears,
Will yet sustain me! Let us call on Him!
Let us kneel down, as we have knelt so oft,
Thy pure cheek touching mine, and call on Him,
Th' all-pitying One, to aid.

[*They kneel.*

Oh, look on us,
Father above!—in tender mercy look
On us, thy children!—through th' o'ershadowing cloud
Of sorrow and mortality, send aid—
Save, or we perish! We would pour our lives
Forth as a joyous offering to thy truth;
But we are weak—we, the bruised reeds of earth,

Are sway'd by every gust. Forgive, O God!
The blindness of our passionate desires,
The fainting of our hearts, the lingering thoughts,
Which cleave to dust! Forgive the strife; accept
The sacrifice, though dim with mortal tears,
From mortal pangs wrung forth! And if our souls,
In all the fervent dreams, the fond excess,
Of their long-clasping love, have wander'd not,
Holiest! from thee—oh! take them to thyself,
After the fiery trial—take them home
To dwell, in that imperishable bond
Before thee link'd, for ever. Hear!—through Him
Who meekly drank the cup of agony,
Who pass'd through death to victory, hear and save!
Pity us, Father! we are girt with snares;
Father in Heaven! we have no help but thee.

[*They rise.*

Is thy soul strengthen'd, my beloved one?
O Edith! couldst thou lift up thy sweet voice,
And sing me that old solemn-breathing hymn
We loved in happier days—the strain which tells
Of the dread conflict in the olive shade?

EDITH *sings.*

He knelt, the Saviour knelt and pray'd,
When but his Father's eye
Look'd through the lonely garden's shade
On that dread agony;
The Lord of All above, beneath,
Was bow'd with sorrow unto death.

The sun set in a fearful hour,
The stars might well grow dim,

When this mortality had power
So to o'ershadow HIM!
That He, who gave man's breath, might know
The very depths of human woe.

He proved them all!—the doubt, the strife,
The faint perplexing dread,
The mists that hang o'er parting life,
All gather'd round his head;
And the Deliverer knelt to pray—
Yet pass'd it not, that cup, away!

It pass'd not—though the stormy wave
Had sunk beneath his tread;
It pass'd not—though to Him the grave
Had yielded up its dead.
But there was sent Him from on high
A gift of strength for man to die.

And was the Sinless thus beset
With anguish and dismay?
How may *we* meet our conflict yet,
In the dark, narrow way?
Through Him—through Him that path who trod.
—Save, or we perish, Son of God!

Hark, hark! the parting signal.
[*Prison attendants enter.*
Fare thee well!
O thou unutterably loved, farewell!
Let our hearts bow to God!
Her. One last embrace—

On earth the last! We have eternity
For love's communion yet! Farewell!—farewell!
[*She is led out.*
'Tis o'er!—the bitterness of death is past!

FLOWERS AND MUSIC IN A ROOM OF SICKNESS.

"Once when I look'd along the laughing earth,
Up the blue heavens, and through the middle air,
Joyfully ringing with the skylark's song,
I wept! and thought how sad for one so young
To bid farewell to so much happiness.
But Christ hath call'd me from this lower world,
Delightful though it be."

WILSON.

Apartment in an English Country-house.—LILIAN *reclining, as sleeping on a Couch. Her Mother watching beside her. Her Sister enters with flowers.*

Mother. Hush! lightly tread! still tranquilly she sleeps,
As when a babe I rock'd her on my heart.
I've watch'd, suspending e'en my breath, in fear
To break the heavenly spell. Move silently!
And oh! those flowers! dear Jessy! bear them hence—
Dost thou forget the passion of quick tears
That shook her trembling frame, when last we brought
The roses to her couch? Dost thou not know
What sudden longings for the woods and hills,

Where once her free steps moved so buoyantly,
These leaves and odours with strange influence wake
In her fast-kindled soul?

Jessy. Oh! she would pine,
Were the wild scents and glowing hues withheld,
Mother! far more than *now* her spirit yearns
For the blue sky, the singing-birds and brooks,
And swell of breathing turf, whose lightsome spring
Their blooms recall.

Lilian (*raising herself*). Is that my Jessy's voice?
It woke me not, sweet mother! I had lain
Silently, visited by waking dreams,
Yet conscious of thy brooding watchfulness,
Long ere I heard the sound. Hath she brought flowers?
Nay, fear not now thy fond child's waywardness,
My thoughtful mother!—in her chasten'd soul
The passion-colour'd images of life,
Which, with their sudden, startling flush, awoke
So oft those burning tears, have died away;
And night is there—still, solemn, holy night!
With all her stars, and with the gentle tune
Of many fountains, low and musical,
By day unheard.

Mother. And wherefore *night*, my child?
Thou art a creature all of life and dawn,
And from thy couch of sickness yet shalt rise,
And walk forth with the dayspring.

Lilian. Hope it not!
Dream it no more, my mother!—there are things
Known but to God, and to the parting soul,
Which feels His thrilling summons.

But my words
Too much o'ershadow those kind, loving eyes.
Bring me thy flowers, dear Jessy! Ah! thy step,
Well do I see, hath not alone explored
The garden bowers, but freely visited
Our wilder haunts. This foam-like meadow-sweet
Is from the cool, green, shadowy river-nook,
Where the stream chimes around th'old mossy stones
With sounds like childhood's laughter. Is that spot
Lovely as when our glad eyes hail'd it first?
Still doth the golden willow bend, and sweep
The clear brown wave with every passing wind?
And through the shallower waters, where they lie
Dimpling in light, do the vein'd pebbles gleam
Like bedded gems? And the white butterflies,
From shade to sun-streak are they glancing still
Among the poplar-boughs?

Jessy. All, all is there
Which glad midsummer's wealthiest hours can bring;
All, save the *soul* of all, thy lightening smile!
Therefore I stood in sadness midst the leaves,
And caught an under-music of lament
In the stream's voice. But Nature waits thee still,
And for thy coming piles a fairy throne
Of richest moss.

Lilian. Alas! it may not be!
My soul hath sent her farewell voicelessly
To all these blessed haunts of song and thought;
Yet not the less I love to look on these,
Their dear memorials,—strew them o'er my couch
Till it grow like a forest bank in spring,

All flush'd with violets and anemones.
Ah! the pale brier-rose! touch'd so tenderly,
As a pure ocean-shell, with faintest red,
Melting away to pearliness! I know
How its long, light festoons o'erarching hung
From the grey rock that rises altar-like,
With its high, waving crown of mountain-ash,
Midst the lone grassy dell. And this rich bough
Of honey'd woodbine tells me of the oak,
Whose deep, midsummer gloom sleeps heavily,
Shedding a verdurous twilight o'er the face
Of the glade's pool. Methinks I see it now;
I look up through the stirring of its leaves
Unto the intense blue, crystal firmament.
The ringdove's wing is flitting o'er my head,
Casting at times a silvery shadow down
Midst the large water-lilies. Beautiful!
How beautiful is all this fair, free world
Under God's open sky!

Mother. Thou art o'erwrought
Once more, my child! The dewy, trembling light
Presaging tears, again is in thine eye.
Oh, hush, dear Lilian! turn thee to repose.

Lilian. Mother! I cannot. In my soul the thoughts
Burn with too subtle and too swift a fire;
Importunately to my lips they throng,
And with their earthly kindred seek to blend
Ere the veil drop between. When I am gone—
(For I *must* go)—then the remember'd words
Wherein these wild imaginings flow forth,
Will to thy fond heart be as amulets

Held there with life and love. And weep not thus,
Mother! dear sister! kindest, gentlest ones!
Be comforted that now *I* weep no more
For the glad earth and all the golden light
Whence I depart.
No! God hath purified my spirit's eye,
And in the folds of this consummate rose
I read bright prophecies. I see not there,
Dimly and mournfully, the word "*farewell*"
On the rich petals traced. No—in soft veins
And characters of beauty, I can read—
"*Look up, look heavenward!*"
Blessed God of Love!
I thank Thee for these gifts, the precious links
Whereby my spirit unto Thee is drawn!
I thank Thee that the loveliness of earth
Higher than earth can raise me! Are not these
But germs of things unperishing, that bloom
Beside th' immortal streams? Shall I not find
The lily of the field, the Saviour's flower,
In the serene and never-moaning air,
And the clear starry light of angel eyes,
A thousand-fold more glorious? Richer far
Will not the violet's dusky purple glow,
When it hath ne'er been press'd to broken hearts,
A record of lost love?
Mother. My Lilian! thou
Surely in *thy* bright life hast little known
Of lost things or of changed!
Lilian. Oh! little yet,
For *thou* hast been my shield! But had it been
My lot on this world's billows to be thrown

Without thy love, O mother! there are hearts
So perilously fashion'd, that for them
God's touch alone hath gentleness enough
To waken, and not break, their thrilling strings! —
We will not speak of this!
By what strange spell
Is it, that ever, when I gaze on flowers,
I dream of music? Something in their hues,
All melting into colour'd harmonies,
Wafts a swift thought of interwoven chords,
Of blended singing-tones, that swell and die
In tenderest falls away. Oh, bring thy harp,
Sister! a gentle heaviness at last
Hath touch'd mine eyelids. Sing to me, and sleep
Will come again.

Jessy. What wouldst thou hear? The Italian peasant's lay,
Which makes the desolate Campagna ring
With "*Roma! Roma!*" or the madrigal
Warbled on moonlight seas of Sicily?
Or the old ditty left by troubadours
To girls of Languedoc?

Lilian. Oh, no! not these.

Jessy. What then? the Moorish melody still known
Within the Alhambra city? or those notes
Born of the Alps, which pierce the exile's heart
Even unto death?

Lilian. No, sister! nor yet these—
Too much of dreamy love, of faint regret,
Of passionately fond remembrance, breathes
In the caressing sweetness of their tones,
For one who dies. They would but woo me back

To glowing life with those Arcadian sounds—
And vainly, vainly. No! a loftier strain,
A deeper music!—something that may bear
The spirit upon slow yet mighty wings,
Unsway'd by gusts of earth; something all fill'd
With solemn adoration, tearful prayer.
Sing me that antique strain which once I deem'd
Almost too sternly simple, too austere
In its grave majesty! I love it now—
Now it seems fraught with holiest power to hush
All billows of the soul, e'en like His voice
That said of old—"Be still!" Sing me that strain,
"The Saviour's dying hour."

JESSY *sings to the harp.*

O Son of Man!
In thy last mortal hour
Shadows of earth closed round thee fearfully!
All that on us is laid,
All the deep gloom,
The desolation and the abandonment,
The dark amaze of death—
All upon *thee* too fell,
Redeemer! Son of Man!

But the keen pang
Wherewith the silver cord
Of earth's affection from the soul is wrung;
The uptearing of those tendrils which have grown
Into the quick, strong heart;
This—*this* the passion and the agony
Of battling love and death,

Surely was not for *thee*,
Holy One! Son of God!

Yes, my Redeemer!
E'en this cup was thine!
Fond, wailing voices call'd thy spirit back:
E'en midst the mighty thoughts
Of that last crowning hour—
E'en on thine awful way to victory,
Wildly they call'd thee back!
And weeping eyes of love
Unto thy heart's deep core
Pierced through the folds of death's mysterious veil.
Sufferer! thou Son of Man!

Mother-tears were mingled
With thy costly blood-drops,
In the shadow of the atoning cross;
And the friend, the faithful,
He that on thy bosom,
Thence imbibing heavenly love, had lain—
He, a pale, sad watcher,
Met with looks of anguish,
All the anguish in *thy* last meek glance—
Dying Son of Man!

Oh! therefore unto thee,
Thou that hast known all woes
Bound in the girdle of mortality!
Thou that wilt lift the reed
Which storms have bruised,
To thee may sorrow through each conflict cry,

And, in that tempest-hour, when love and life
Mysteriously must part,
When tearful eyes
Are passionately bent
To drink earth's last fond meaning from our gaze,
Then, then forsake us not!
Shed on our spirits then
The faith and deep submissiveness of thine!
Thou that didst love,
Thou that didst weep and die—
Thou that didst rise a victor glorified:
Conqueror! thou Son of God!

CATHEDRAL HYMN.

"They dreamt not of a perishable home
Who thus could build. Be mine, in hours of fear
Or grovelling thought, to seek a refuge here."
WORDSWORTH.

A DIM and mighty minster of old time!
A temple shadowy with remembrances
Of the majestic past! The very light
Streams with a colouring of heroic days
In every ray, which leads through arch and aisle
A path of dreamy lustre, wandering back
To other years;—and the rich fretted roof,
And the wrought coronals of summer leaves,
Ivy and vine, and many a sculptured rose—
The tenderest image of mortality—
Binding the slender columns, whose light shafts
Cluster like stems in corn-sheaves;—all these things

Tell of a race that nobly, fearlessly,
On their heart's worship pour'd a wealth of love!
Honour be with the dead! The people kneel
Under the helms of antique chivalry,
And in the crimson gloom from banners thrown,
And midst the forms, in pale, proud slumber carved,
Of warriors on their tombs. The people kneel
Where mail-clad chiefs have knelt; where jewell'd crowns
On the flush'd brows of conquerors have been set;
Where the high anthems of old victories
Have made the dust give echoes. Hence, vain thoughts!
Memories of power and pride, which long ago,
Like dim processions of a dream, have sunk
In twilight-depths away. Return, my soul!
The Cross recalls thee. Lo! the blessed Cross!
High o'er the banners and the crests of earth,
Fix'd in its meek and still supremacy!
And lo! the throng of beating human hearts,
With all their secret scrolls of buried grief,
All their full treasures of immortal hope,
Gather'd before their God! Hark! how the flood
Of the rich organ-harmony bears up
Their voice on its high waves!—a mighty burst!
A forest-sounding music! Every tone
Which the blasts call forth with their harping wings
From gulfs of tossing foliage, there is blent:
And the old minster—forest-like itself—
With its long avenues of pillar'd shade,
Seems quivering all with spirit, as that strain
O'erflows its dim recesses, leaving not

One tomb unthrill'd by the strong sympathy
Answering the electric notes. Join, join, my soul!
In thine own lowly, trembling consciousness,
And thine own solitude, the glorious hymn.

Rise like an altar-fire!
In solemn joy aspire,
Deepening thy passion still, O choral strain!
On thy strong, rushing wind
Bear up from humankind
Thanks and implorings—be they not in vain!

Father, which art on high!
Weak is the melody
Of harp or song to reach thine awful ear,
Unless the heart be there,
Winging the words of prayer
With its own fervent faith or suppliant fear.

Let, then, thy Spirit brood
Over the multitude—
Be thou amidst them, through that heavenly Guest!
So shall their cry have power
To win from thee a shower
Of healing gifts for every wounded breast.

What griefs that make no sign,
That ask no aid but thine,
Father of mercies! here before thee swell!
As to the open sky,
All their dark waters lie
To thee reveal'd, in each close bosom-cell.

The sorrow for the dead,
Mantling its lonely head
From the world's glare, is, in thy sight, set free;
And the fond, aching love,
Thy minister to move
All the wrung spirit, softening it for thee.

And doth not thy dread eye
Behold the agony
In that most hidden chamber of the heart,
Where darkly sits remorse,
Beside the secret source
Of fearful visions, keeping watch apart?

Yes! here before thy throne
Many—yet each alone—
To thee that terrible unveiling make:
And still small whispers clear
Are startling many an ear,
As if a trumpet bade the dead awake.

How dreadful is this place!
The glory of thy face
Fills it too searchingly for mortal sight.
Where shall the guilty flee?
Over what far-off sea?
What hills, what woods, may shroud him from that light?

Not to the cedar-shade
Let his vain flight be made;
Nor the old mountains, nor the desert sea;

What, but the Cross, can yield
The hope—the stay—the shield?
Thence may the Atoner lead him up to Thee!

Be thou, be thou his aid!
Oh! let thy love pervade
The haunted caves of self-accusing thought!
There let the living stone
Be cleft—the seed be sown—
The song of fountains from the silence brought!

So shall thy breath once more
Within the soul restore
Thine own first image—Holiest and Most High!
As a clear lake is filled
With hues of heaven, instill'd
Down to the depths of its calm purity.

And if, amidst the throng
Link'd by the ascending song,
There are whose thoughts in trembling rapture soar;
Thanks, Father! that the power
Of joy, man's early dower,
Thus, e'en midst tears, can fervently adore!

Thanks for each gift divine!
Eternal praise be thine,
Blessing and love, O Thou that hearest prayer!
Let the hymn pierce the sky,
And let the tombs reply!
For seed, that waits the harvest-time, is there.

WOOD WALK AND HYMN.

" Move along these shades
In gentleness of heart: with gentle hand
Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods."
WORDSWORTH.

FATHER—CHILD.

Child. There are the aspens, with their silvery leaves
Trembling, for ever trembling; though the lime
And chestnut boughs, and those long, arching sprays
Of eglantine, hang still, as if the wood
Were all one picture!

Father. Hast thou heard, my boy,
The peasant's legend of that quivering tree?

Child. No, father: doth he say the fairies dance
Amidst the branches?

Father. Oh! a cause more deep,
More solemn far, the rustic doth assign
To the strange restlessness of those wan leaves!
The cross he deems, the blessed cross, whereon
The meek Redeemer bow'd his head to death,
Was framed of aspen wood; and since that hour,
Through all its race the pale tree hath sent down
A thrilling consciousness, a secret awe,
Making them tremulous, when not a breeze
Disturbs the airy thistle-down, or shakes
The light lines of the shining gossamer.

Child (*after a pause*). Dost thou believe it, father?

Father. Nay, my child,
We walk in clearer light. But yet, even now,

With something of a lingering love, I read
The characters, by that mysterious hour,
Stamp'd on the reverential soul of man
In visionary days; and thence thrown back
On the fair forms of nature. Many a sign
Of the great sacrifice which won us heaven,
The woodman and the mountaineer can trace
On rock, on herb, and flower. And be it so!
They do not wisely that, with hurried hand,
Would pluck these salutary fancies forth
From their strong soil within the peasant's breast,
And scatter them—far, far too fast!—away
As worthless weeds. Oh! little do we know
When they have soothed, when saved!
But come, dear boy!
My words grow tinged with thought too deep for thee.
Come—let us search for violets.

Child. Know you not
More of the legends which the woodmen tell
Amidst the trees and flowers?

Father. Wilt thou know more?
Bring then the folding leaf, with dark-brown stains,
There—by the mossy roots of yon old beech,
Midst the rich tuft of cowslips—see'st thou not?
There is a spray of woodbine from the tree
Just bending o'er it with a wild bee's weight.

Child. The Arum leaf?

Father. Yes. These deep inwrought marks,
The villager will tell thee (and with voice
Lower'd in his true heart's reverent earnestness),
Are the flower's portion from th' atoning blood

On Calvary shed. Beneath the cross it grew ;
And, in the vase-like hollow of its leaf,
Catching from that dread shower of agony
A few mysterious drops, transmitted thus
Unto the groves and hills, their sealing stains,
A heritage, for storm or vernal wind
Never to waft away !
And hast thou seen
The passion-flower ? It grows not in the woods,
But midst the bright things brought from other climes.
Child. What ! the pale star-shaped flower, with purple streaks,
And light green tendrils ?
Father. Thou hast mark'd it well.
Yes ! a pale, starry, dreamy-looking flower,
As from a land of spirits ! To mine eye
Those faint, wan petals—colourless, and yet
Not white, but shadowy—with the mystic lines
(As letters of some wizard language gone)
Into their vapour-like transparence wrought,
Bear something of a strange solemnity,
Awfully lovely !—and the Christian's thought
Loves, in their cloudy penciling, to find
Dread symbols of his Lord's last mortal pangs
Set by God's hand—the coronal of thorns—
The cross, the wounds—with other meanings deep
Which I will teach thee when we meet again
That flower, the chosen for the martyr's wreath,
The Saviour's holy flower.
But let us pause :
Now have we reach'd the very inmost heart

Of the old wood. How the green shadows close
Into a rich, clear, summer darkness round,
A luxury of gloom! Scarce doth one ray,
Even when a soft wind parts the foliage, steal
O'er the bronzed pillars of these deep arcades;
Or if it doth, 'tis with a mellow'd hue
Of glow-worm colour'd light.
Here, in the days
Of pagan visions, would have been a place
For worship of the wood-nymphs! Through these oaks
A small, fair gleaming temple might have thrown
The quivering image of its Dorian shafts
On the stream's bosom; or a sculptured form,
Dryad, or fountain-goddess of the gloom,
Have bow'd its head o'er that dark crystal down,
Drooping with beauty, as a lily droops
Under bright rain. But *we*, my child, are here
With God, our God, a Spirit, who requires
Heart-worship, given in spirit and in truth;
And this high knowledge—deep, rich, vast enough
To fill and hallow all the solitude—
Makes consecrated earth where'er we move,
Without the aid of shrines.
What! dost thou feel
The solemn whispering influence of the scene
Oppressing thy young heart, that thou dost draw
More closely to my side, and clasp my hand
Faster in thine? Nay, fear not, gentle child!
'Tis love, not fear, whose vernal breath pervades
The stillness round. Come, sit beside me here,
Where brooding violets mantle this green slope

With dark exuberance; and beneath these plumes
Of wavy fern, look where the cup-moss holds
In its pure, crimson goblets, fresh and bright,
The starry dews of morning. Rest awhile,
And let me hear once more the woodland verse
I taught thee late—'twas made for such a scene.
[*Child speaks.*

WOOD HYMN.

Broods there some spirit here?
The summer leaves hang silent as a cloud;
And o'er the pools, all still and darkly clear,
The wild-wood hyacinth with awe seems bow'd;
And something of a tender cloistral gloom
Deepens the violet's bloom.

The very light that streams
Through the dim, dewy veil of foliage round
Comes tremulous with emerald-tinted gleams—
As if it knew the place were holy ground;
And would not startle, with too bright a burst,
Flowers, all divinely nursed.

Wakes there some spirit here?
A swift wind, fraught with change, comes rushing by;
And leaves and waters, in its wild career,
Shed forth sweet voices—each a mystery!
Surely some awful influence must pervade
These depths of trembling shade!

Yes! lightly, softly move!
There *is* a power, a presence in the woods;

A viewless being that, with life and love,
Informs the reverential solitudes :
The rich air knows it, and the mossy sod—
Thou, *thou* art here, my God !

And if with awe we tread
The minster floor, beneath the storied pane,
And midst the mouldering banners of the dead,
Shall the green, voiceful wild seem *less* thy fane,
Where thou alone hast built ?—where arch and roof
Are of thy living woof ?

The silence and the sound,
In the lone places, breathe alike of thee ;
The temple twilight of the gloom profound,
The dew-cup of the frail anemone,
The reed by every wandering whisper thrill'd—
All, all with thee are fill'd !

Oh ! purify mine eyes,
More and yet more, by love and lowly thought,
Thy presence, holiest One ! to recognise
In these majestic aisles which thou hast wrought !
And, midst their sea-like murmurs, teach mine ear
Ever thy voice to hear !

And sanctify my heart
To meet the awful sweetness of that tone
With no faint thrill or self-accusing start,
But a deep joy the heavenly guest to own—
Joy, such as dwelt in Eden's glorious bowers
Ere sin had dimm'd the flowers.

Let me not know the change
O'er nature thrown by guilt !—the boding sky,
The hollow leaf-sounds ominous and strange,
The weight wherewith the dark tree shadows lie !
Father ! oh ! keep my footsteps pure and free,
To walk the woods with thee !

PRAYER OF THE LONELY STUDENT.

" Soul of our souls ! and safeguard of the world !
Sustain—*Thou* only canst—the sick at heart ;
Restore their languid spirits, and recall
Their lost affections unto thee and thine."
WORDSWORTH.

NIGHT—holy night—the time
For mind's free breathings in a purer clime !
Night !—when in happier hour the unveiling sky
Woke all my kindled soul,
To meet its revelations, clear and high,
With the strong joy of immortality !
Now hath strange sadness wrapp'd me—strange and deep—
And my thoughts faint, and shadows o'er them roll,
E'en when I deem'd them seraph-plumed, to sweep
Far beyond earth's control.

Wherefore is this ? I see the stars returning,
Fire after fire in heaven's rich temple burning :
Fast shine they forth—my spirit friends, my guides,
Bright rulers of my being's inmost tides ;
They shine—but faintly, through a quivering haze :

Oh! is the dimness *mine* which clouds those rays?
They from whose glance my childhood drank delight!
A joy unquestioning—a love intense—
They that, unfolding to more thoughtful sight
The harmony of their magnificence,
Drew silently the worship of my youth
To the grave sweetness on the brow of truth;
Shall they shower blessing, with their beams divine,
Down to the watcher on the stormy sea,
And to the pilgrim toiling for his shrine
Through some wild pass of rocky Apennine,
And to the wanderer lone
On wastes of Afric thrown,
And not to *me?*
Am I a thing forsaken?
And is the gladness taken
From the bright-pinion'd nature which hath soar'd
Through realms by royal eagle ne'er explored,
And, bathing there in streams of fiery light,
Found strength to gaze upon the Infinite?

And now an alien! Wherefore must this be?
How shall I rend the chain?
How drink rich life again
From those pure urns of radiance, welling free?
—Father of Spirits! let me turn to thee!

Oh! if too much exulting in her dower,
My soul, not yet to lowly thought subdued,
Hath stood without thee on her hill of power—
A fearful and a dazzling solitude!

And therefore from that haughty summit's crown
To dim desertion is by thee cast down;
Behold! thy child submissively hath bow'd—
Shine on him through the cloud!

Let the now darken'd earth and curtain'd heaven
Back to his vision with thy face be given!
Bear him on high once more,
But in thy strength to soar,
And wrapt and still'd by that o'ershadowing might,
Forth on the empyreal blaze to look with chasten'd sight.

Or if it be that, like the ark's lone dove,
My thoughts go forth, and find no resting-place,
No sheltering home of sympathy and love
In the responsive bosoms of my race,
And back return, a darkness and a weight,
Till my unanswer'd heart grows desolate—
Yet, yet sustain me, Holiest!—I am vow'd
To solemn service high;
And shall the spirit, for thy tasks endow'd,
Sink on the threshold of the sanctuary,
Fainting beneath the burden of the day,
Because no human tone
Unto the altar-stone
Of that pure spousal fane inviolate,
Where it should make eternal truth its mate,
May cheer the sacred, solitary way?

Oh! be the whisper of thy voice within
Enough to strengthen! Be the hope to win

A more deep-seeing homage for thy name,
Far, far beyond the burning dream of fame!
Make me thine only?—Let me add but one
To those refulgent steps all undefiled,
Which glorious minds have piled
Through bright self-offering, earnest, childlike, lone,
For mounting to thy throne!
And let my soul, upborne
On wings of inner morn,
Find, in illumined secresy, the sense
Of that bless'd work, its own high recompense.

The dimness melts away
That on your glory lay,
O ye majestic watchers of the skies!
Through the dissolving veil,
Which made each aspect pale,
Your gladd'ning fires once more I recognise;
And once again a shower
Of hope, and joy, and power,
Streams on my soul from your immortal eyes.
And if that splendour to my sober'd sight
Come tremulous, with more of pensive light—
Something, though beautiful, yet deeply fraught
With more that pierces through each fold of thought
Than I was wont to trace
On Heaven's unshadow'd face—
Be it e'en so!—be mine, though set apart
Unto a radiant ministry, yet still
A lowly, fearful, self-distrusting heart,

Bow'd before thee, O Mightiest! whose bless'd will
All the pure stars rejoicingly fulfil.*

THE TRAVELLER'S EVENING SONG.

FATHER! guide me! Day declines,
Hollow winds are in the pines;
Darkly waves each giant bough
O'er the sky's last crimson glow:
Hush'd is now the convent's bell,
Which erewhile with breezy swell
From the purple mountains bore
Greeting to the sunset-shore.
Now the sailor's vesper-hymn
Dies away.
Father! in the forest dim,
Be my stay!

In the low and shivering thrill
Of the leaves that late hung still;
In the dull and muffled tone
Of the sea-wave's distant moan;
In the deep tints of the sky,
There are signs of tempests nigh.
Ominous, with sullen sound,
Falls the closing dusk around.

* Written after hearing the introductory Lecture on Astronomy delivered in Trinity College, Dublin, by Sir William Hamilton, royal astronomer of Ireland, on the 8th November 1832.

Father! through the storm and shade
O'er the wild,
Oh! be *Thou* the lone one's aid—
Save thy child!

Many a swift and sounding plume
Homewards, through the boding gloom,
O'er my way hath flitted fast
Since the farewell sunbeam pass'd
From the chestnut's ruddy bark,
And the pools, now lone and dark,
Where the wakening night-winds sigh
Through the long reeds mournfully.
Homeward, homeward, all things haste—
God of might!
Shield the homeless midst the waste!
Be his light!

In his distant cradle-nest,
Now my babe is laid to rest;
Beautiful his slumber seems
With a glow of heavenly dreams—
Beautiful, o'er that bright sleep,
Hang soft eyes of fondness deep,
Where his mother bends to pray
For the loved and far away.
Father, guard that household bower,
Hear that prayer!
Back, through thine all-guiding power,
Lead me there!

Darker, wilder grows the night;
Not a star sends quivering light

Through the massy arch of shade
By the stern old forest made.
Thou! to whose unslumbering eyes
All my pathway open lies,
By thy Son who knew distress
In the lonely wilderness,
Where no roof to that bless'd head
Shelter gave—
Father! through the time of dread,
Save—oh, save!

BURIAL OF AN EMIGRANT'S CHILD IN THE FORESTS.

SCENE.—*The banks of a solitary river in an American forest. A tent under pine-trees in the fore-ground.* AGNES *sitting before the tent, with a child in her arms apparently sleeping.*

Agnes. Surely 'tis all a dream—a fever-dream!
The desolation and the agony—
The strange, red sunrise, and the gloomy woods,
So terrible with their dark giant boughs,
And the broad, lonely river!—all a dream!
And my boy's voice will wake me, with its clear,
Wild, singing tones, as they were wont to come
Through the wreath'd sweetbrier at my lattice-panes
In happy, happy England! Speak to me!
Speak to thy mother, bright one! she hath watch'd
All the dread night beside thee, till her brain
Is darken'd by swift waves of fantasies,

And her soul faint with longing for thy voice.
Oh! I *must* wake him with one gentle kiss
On his fair brow?
(*Shudderingly.*) The strange, damp, thrilling touch!
The marble chill! Now, now it rushes back—
Now I know all!—dead—*dead!*—a fearful word!
My boy hath left me in the wilderness,
To journey on without the blessed light
In his deep, loving eyes. He's gone!—he's gone!

Her HUSBAND *enters.*

Husband. Agnes! my Agnes! hast thou look'd thy last
On our sweet slumberer's face? The hour is come—
The couch made ready for his last repose.

Agnes. Not yet! thou canst not take him from me yet!
If he but left me for a few short days,
This were too brief a gazing time to draw
His angel image into my fond heart,
And fix its beauty there. And now—oh! *now,*
Never again the laughter of his eye
Shall send its gladd'ning summer through my soul—
Never on earth again. Yet, yet delay!
Thou canst not take him from me.

Husband. My beloved!
Is it not God hath taken him? the God
That took our first-born, o'er whose early grave
Thou didst bow down thy saint-like head, and say,
"His will be done!"

Agnes. Oh! that near household grave,
Under the turf of England, seem'd not half—
Not half so much to part me from my child

As these dark woods. It lay beside our home,
And I could watch the sunshine, through all hours,
Loving and clinging to the grassy spot;
And I could dress its greensward with fresh flowers,
Familiar, meadow flowers. O'er *thee*, my babe!
The primrose will not blossom! Oh! that now,
Together, by thy fair young sister's side,
We lay midst England's valleys!

Husband. Dost thou grieve,
Agnes! that thou hast follow'd o'er the deep
An exile's fortunes? If it *thus* can be,
Then, after many a conflict cheerily met,
My spirit sinks at last.

Agnes. Forgive! forgive!
My Edmund, pardon me! Oh! grief is wild—
Forget its words, quick spray-drops from a fount
Of unknown bitterness! Thou art my home!
Mine only and my blessed one! Where'er
Thy warm heart beats in its true nobleness,
There is my country! *there* my head shall rest,
And throb no more. Oh! still, by thy strong love,
Bear up the feeble reed!

(*Kneeling with the child in her arms.*)

And thou, my God!
Hear my soul's cry from this dread wilderness!
Oh! hear, and pardon me! If I have made
This treasure, sent from thee, too much the ark
Fraught with mine earthward clinging happiness,
Forgetting him who gave, and might resume,
Oh, pardon me!

If nature hath rebell'd,
And from thy light turn'd wilfully away,

Making a midnight of her agony,
When the despairing passion of her clasp
Was from its idol stricken at one touch
Of thine Almighty hand—oh, pardon me!
By thy son's anguish, pardon! In the soul
The tempests and the waves will know thy voice—
Father! say, "Peace, be still!"
(*Giving the child to her husband.*)
Farewell, my babe!
Go from my bosom now to other rest!
With this last kiss on thine unsullied brow,
And on thy pale, calm cheek these contrite tears,
I yield thee to thy Maker!
Husband. Now, my wife!
Thine own meek holiness beams forth once more
A light upon my path. Now shall I bear,
From thy dear arms, the slumberer to repose—
With a calm, trustful heart.
Agnes. My Edmund! where—
Where wilt thou lay him?
Husband. See'st thou where the spire
Of yon dark cypress reddens in the sun
To burning gold?—there—o'er yon willow tuft?
Under that native desert monument
Lies his lone bed. Our Hubert, since the dawn,
With the grey mosses of the wilderness
Hath lined it closely through; and there breathed forth,
E'en from the fulness of his own pure heart,
A wild, sad forest hymn—a song of tears,
Which thou wilt learn to love. I heard the boy
Chanting it o'er his solitary task,

As wails a wood-bird to the thrilling leaves,
Perchance unconsciously.

Agnes. My gentle son!
The affectionate, the gifted! With what joy—
Edmund, rememberest thou?—with what bright joy
His baby brother ever to his arms
Would spring from rosy sleep, and playfully
Hide the rich clusters of his gleaming hair
In that kind, youthful breast! Oh! now no more,
But strengthen me, my God! and melt my heart,
Even to a well-spring of adoring tears,
For many a blessing left.
(*Bending over the child.*) Once more farewell!
Oh, the pale, piercing sweetness of that look!
How can it be sustained? Away, away!
[*After a short pause.*
Edmund, my woman's nature still is weak—
I cannot see thee render dust to dust!
Go thou, my husband, to thy solemn task;
I will rest here, and still my soul with prayer
Till thy return.

Husband. Then strength be with thy prayer!
Peace on thy bosom! Faith and heavenly hope
Unto thy spirit! Fare thee well a while!
We must be pilgrims of the woods again,
After this mournful hour.

[*He goes out with the child.* AGNES *kneels in prayer. After a time, voices without are heard singing.*

THE FUNERAL HYMN.

Where the long reeds quiver,
Where the pines make moan,
By the forest-river,
Sleeps our babe alone.
England's field-flowers may not deck his grave,
Cypress shadows o'er him darkly wave.

Woods unknown receive him,
Midst the mighty wild;
Yet with God we leave him,
Blessed, blessed child!
And our tears gush o'er his lovely dust,
Mournfully, yet still from hearts of trust.

Though his eye hath brighten'd
Oft our weary way,
And his clear laugh lightened
Half our hearts' dismay;
Still in hope we give back what was given,
Yielding up the beautiful to Heaven.

And to her who bore him,
Her who long must weep,
Yet shall Heaven restore him
From his pale, sweet sleep!
Those blue eyes of love and peace again
Through her soul will shine, undimm'd by pain.

Where the long reeds quiver,
Where the pines make moan,

Leave we by the river
Earth to earth alone!
God and Father! may our journeyings on
Lead to where the blessed boy is gone!

From the exile's sorrow,
From the wanderer's dread
Of the night and morrow,
Early, brightly fled;
Thou hast call'd him to a sweeter home
Than our lost one o'er the ocean's foam.

Now let thought behold him
With his angel look,
Where those arms enfold him,
Which benignly took
Israel's babes to their Good Shepherd's breast,
When his voice their tender meekness blest.

Turn thee now, fond mother!
From thy dead, oh, turn!
Linger not, young brother,
Here to dream and mourn:
Only kneel once more around the sod,
Kneel, and bow submitted hearts to God!

EASTER-DAY IN A MOUNTAIN CHURCHYARD.

THERE is a wakening on the mighty hills,
A kindling with the spirit of the morn!
Bright gleams are scatter'd from the thousand rills,
And a soft visionary hue is born
On the young foliage, worn
By all the embosom'd woods—a silvery green,
Made up of spring and dew, harmoniously serene.

And lo! where, floating through a glory, sings
The lark, alone amidst a crystal sky!
Lo! where the darkness of his buoyant wings,
Against a soft and rosy cloud on high,
Trembles with melody!
While the far-echoing solitudes rejoice
To the rich laugh of music in that voice.

But purer light than of the early sun
Is on you cast, O mountains of the earth!
And for your dwellers nobler joy is won
Than the sweet echoes of the skylark's mirth,
By this glad morning's birth!
And gifts more precious by its breath are shed
Than music on the breeze, dew on the violet's head.

Gifts for the *soul*, from whose illumined eye,
O'er nature's face the colouring glory flows;
Gifts from the fount of immortality,

Which, fill'd with balm, unknown to human woes,
Lay hush'd in dark repose,
Till thou, bright dayspring! madest its waves our own,
By thine unsealing of the burial-stone.

Sing, then, with all your choral strains, ye hills!
And let a full victorious tone be given,
By rock and cavern, to the wind which fills
Your urn-like depths with sound! The tomb is riven,
The radiant gate of heaven
Unfolded—and the stern, dark shadow cast
By death's o'ersweeping wing, from the earth's bosom past.

And you, ye graves! upon whose turf I stand,
Girt with the slumber of the hamlet's dead,
Time, with a soft and reconciling hand
The covering mantle of bright moss hath spread
O'er every narrow bed:
But not by time, and not by nature sown
Was the celestial seed, whence round you peace hath grown.

Christ hath arisen! Oh! not one cherish'd head
Hath, midst the flowery sods, been pillow'd here
Without a hope (howe'er the heart hath bled
In its vain yearnings o'er the unconscious bier),
A hope, upspringing clear
From those majestic tidings of the morn,
Which lit the living way to all of woman born.

Thou hast wept mournfully, O human love!
E'en on this greensward; night hath heard thy cry,
Heart-stricken one! thy precious dust above,
Night, and the hills, which sent forth no reply
Unto thine agony!
But He who wept like thee, thy Lord, thy guide,
Christ hath arisen, O love! thy tears shall all be dried.

Dark must have been the gushing of those tears,
Heavy the unsleeping phantom of the tomb
On thine impassion'd soul, in elder years,
When, burden'd with the mystery of its doom,
Mortality's thick gloom
Hung o'er the sunny world, and with the breath
Of the triumphant rose came blending thoughts of death.

By thee, sad Love, and by thy sister, Fear,
Then was the ideal robe of beauty wrought
To vail that haunting shadow, still too near,
Still ruling secretly the conqueror's thought,
And, where the board was fraught
With wine and myrtles in the summer bower,
Felt, e'en when disavow'd, a presence and a power.

But that dark night is closed: and o'er the dead,
Here, where the gleamy primrose-tufts have blown,
And where the mountain-heath a couch has spread,
And, settling oft on some grey letter'd stone,
The redbreast warbles lone;
And the wild-bee's deep drowsy murmurs pass,
Like a low thrill of harp-strings, through the grass:

Here, midst the chambers of the Christian's sleep,
We o'er death's gulf may look with trusting eye,
For Hope sits, dovelike, on the gloomy deep,
And the green hills wherein these valleys lie
Seem all one sanctuary
Of holiest thought—nor needs their fresh bright sod,
Urn, wreath, or shrine, for tombs all dedicate to God.

Christ hath arisen! O mountain-peaks! attest;
Witness, resounding glen and torrent wave,
The immortal courage in the human breast
Sprung from that victory; tell how oft the brave
To camp midst rock and cave,
Nerved by those words, their struggling faith have borne,
Planting the cross on high above the clouds of morn!

The Alps have heard sweet hymnings for to-day—
Ay, and wild sounds of sterner, deeper tone,
Have thrill'd their pines, when those that knelt to pray
Rose up to arm! The pure high snows have known
A colouring not their own,
But from true hearts, which, by that crimson stain,
Gave token of a trust that call'd no suffering vain.

Those days are past. The mountains wear no more
The solemn splendour of the martyr's blood,
And may that awful record, as of yore,
Never again be known to field or flood!
E'en though the faithful stood,

A noble army, in the exulting sight
Of earth and heaven, which blessed their battle for
the right!

But many a martyrdom by hearts unshaken
Is yet borne silently in homes obscure;
And many a bitter cup is meekly taken;
And, for the strength whereby the just and pure
Thus steadfastly endure,
Glory to Him whose victory won that dower,
Him, from whose rising stream'd that robe of spirit
power.

Glory to Him! Hope to the suffering breast!
Light to the nations! He hath roll'd away
The mists, which, gathering into deathlike rest,
Between the soul and heaven's calm ether lay—
His love hath made it day
With those that sat in darkness. Earth and sea!
Lift up glad strains for man by truth divine made
free!

THE CHILD READING THE BIBLE.

"A dancing shape, an image gay,
To haunt, to startle, to waylay.
. . . . .
A being breathing thoughtful breath,
A traveller between life and death."

WORDSWORTH.

I SAW him at his sport erewhile,
The bright exulting boy,

Like summer's lightning came the smile
  Of his young spirit's joy;
A flash that, wheresoe'er it broke,
To life undreamt-of beauty woke.

His fair locks waved in sunny play,
  By a clear fountain's side,
Where jewel-colour'd pebbles lay
  Beneath the shallow tide;
And pearly spray at times would meet
The glancing of his fairy feet.

He twined him wreaths of all spring-flowers,
  Which drank that streamlet's dew;
He flung them o'er the wave in showers,
  Till, gazing, scarce I knew
Which seem'd more pure, or bright, or wild,
The singing fount or laughing child.

To look on all that joy and bloom
  Made earth one festal scene,
Where the dull shadow of the tomb
  Seem'd as it ne'er had been.
How could one image of decay
Steal o'er the dawn of such clear day?

I saw once more that aspect bright —
  The boy's meek head was bow'd
In silence o'er the Book of Light,
  And, like a golden cloud—
The still cloud of a pictured sky—
His locks droop'd round it lovingly.

And if my heart had deem'd him fair,
When in the fountain glade,
A creature of the sky and air,
Almost on wings he play'd;
Oh! how much holier beauty now
Lit the young human being's brow!

The being born to toil, to die,
To break forth from the tomb,
Unto far nobler destiny
Than waits the skylark's plume!
I saw him, in that thoughtful hour,
Win the first knowledge of his dower.

The *soul*, the awakening *soul* I saw;
My watching eye could trace
The shadows of its new-born awe,
Sweeping o'er that fair face;
As o'er a flower might pass the shade
By some dread angel's pinion made!

The soul, the mother of deep fears,
Of high hopes infinite,
Of glorious dreams, mysterious tears,
Of sleepless inner sight;
Lovely, but solemn, it arose,
Unfolding what no more might close.

The red-leaved tablets,* undefiled,
As yet, by evil thought—

* "All this, and more than this, is now engraved upon the *red-leaved tablets* of my heart."—HAYWOOD.

Oh! little dream'd the brooding child,
  Of what within me wrought,
While *his* young heart first burn'd and stirr'd,
And quiver'd to the eternal word.

And reverently my spirit caught
  The reverence of *his* gaze;
A sight with dew of blessing fraught
  To hallow after-days;
To make the proud heart meekly wise
By the sweet faith in those calm eyes.

It seem'd as if a temple rose
  Before me brightly there,
And in the depths of its repose
  My soul o'erflow'd with prayer,
Feeling a solemn presence nigh—
The power of infant sanctity!

O Father! mould my heart once more,
  By thy prevailing breath!
Teach me, oh! teach me to adore
  E'en with that pure one's faith;
A faith, all made of love and light,
Child-like, and therefore full of might!

A POET'S DYING HYMN.

"Be mute who will, who can,
Yet I will praise thee with impassioned voice!
Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine
In such a temple as we now behold,
Rear'd for thy presence; therefore am I bound
To worship here and everywhere."

WORDSWORTH.

THE blue, deep, glorious heavens! I lift mine eye,
And bless thee, O my God! that I have met
And own'd thine image in the majesty
Of their calm temple still! that never yet
There hath thy face been shrouded from my sight
By noontide blaze, or sweeping storm of night:
I bless thee, O my God!

That now still clearer, from their pure expanse,
I see the mercy of thine aspect shine,
Touching death's features with a lovely glance
Of light, serenely, solemnly divine,
And lending to each holy star a ray
As of kind eyes, that woo my soul away:
I bless thee, O my God!

That I have heard thy voice, nor been afraid,
In the earth's garden—midst the mountains old,
And the low thrillings of the forest-shade,
And the wild sound of waters uncontroll'd—
And upon many a desert plain and shore—
No solitude—for there I felt *thee* more:
I bless thee, O my God!

And if thy spirit on thy child hath shed
The gift, the vision of the unseal'd eye,
To pierce the mist o'er life's deep meanings spread,
To reach the hidden fountain-urns that lie
Far in man's heart—if I have kept it free
And pure—a consecration unto thee:
I bless thee, O my God!

If my soul's utterance hath by thee been fraught
With an awakening power—if thou hast made,
Like the wing'd seed, the breathings of my thought,
And by the swift winds bid them be convey'd
To lands of other lays, and there become
Native as early melodies of home:
I bless thee, O my God!

Not for the brightness of a mortal wreath,
Not for a place midst kingly minstrels dead,
But that, perchance, a faint gale of thy breath,
A still small whisper in my song hath led
One struggling spirit upwards to thy throne,
Or but one hope, one prayer:—for this alone
I bless thee, O my God!

That I have loved—that I have known the love
Which troubles in the soul the tearful springs,
Yet, with a colouring halo from above,
Tinges and glorifies all earthly things,
Whate'er its anguish or its woe may be:
Still weaving links for intercourse with thee:
I bless thee, O my God!

That by the passion of its deep distress,
And by the o'erflowing of its mighty prayer,
And by the yearning of its tenderness,
Too full for words upon their stream to bear,
I have been drawn still closer to thy shrine,
Well-spring of love, the unfathom'd, the divine;
I bless thee, O my God!

That hope hath ne'er my heart or song forsaken,
High hope, which even from mystery, doubt, or dread,
Calmly, rejoicingly, the things hath taken
Whereby its torchlight for the race was fed:
That passing storms have only fanned the fire
Which pierced them still with its triumphal spire,
I bless thee, O my God!

Now art thou calling me in every gale,
Each sound and token of the dying day;
Thou leavest me not—though early life grows pale,
I am not darkly sinking to decay;
But, hour by hour, my soul's dissolving shroud
Melts off to radiance, as a silvery cloud.
I bless thee, O my God!

And if this earth, with all its choral streams,
And crowning woods, and soft or solemn skies,
And mountain sanctuaries for poet's dreams,
Be lovely still in my departing eyes—
'Tis not that fondly I would linger here,
But that thy footprints on its dust appear:
I bless thee, O my God!

And that the tender shadowing I behold,
The tracery veining every leaf and flower,
Of glories cast in more consummate mould,
No longer vassals to the changeful hour;
That life's last roses to my thoughts can bring
Rich visions of imperishable spring:
I bless thee, O my God!

Yes! the young vernal voices in the skies
Woo me not back, but, wandering past mine ear,
Seem heralds of th' eternal melodies,
The spirit-music, imperturb'd and clear;
The full of soul, yet passionate no more—
Let *me*, too, joining those pure strains, adore!
I bless thee, O my God!

Now aid, sustain me still!—to thee I come,
Make thou my dwelling where thy children are!
And for the hope of that immortal home,
And for thy Son, the bright and morning star,
The sufferer and the victor-king of death,
I bless thee with my glad song's dying breath!
I bless thee, O my God!

THE FUNERAL DAY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"Many an eye
May wail the dimming of our shining star."
SHAKESPEARE.

A GLORIOUS voice hath ceased!
Mournfully, reverently—the funeral chant
Breathe reverently! There is a dreamy sound,

A hollow murmur, of the dying year,
In the deep woods. Let it be wild and sad!
A more Æolian melancholy tone
Than ever wail'd o'er bright things perishing!
For *that* is passing from the darken'd land,
Which the green summer will not bring us back—
Though all her songs return. The funeral chant
Breathe reverently! They bear the mighty forth,
The kingly ruler in the realms of mind—
They bear him through the household paths, the groves,
Where every tree had music of its own
To his quick ear of knowledge taught by love—
And he is silent! Past the living stream
They bear him now; the stream, whose kindly voice
On alien shores his true heart burn'd to hear—
And he is silent! O'er the heathery hills,
Which his own soul had mantled with a light
Richer than autumn's purple, now they move—
And he is silent! He whose flexile lips
Were but unseal'd, and lo! a thousand forms,
From every pastoral glen and fern-clad height,
In glowing life upsprang. Vassal and chief,
Rider and steed, with shout and bugle-peal,
Fast rushing through the brightly troubled air,
Like the wild huntsman's band. And still they live,
To those fair scenes imperishably bound,
And, from the mountain-mist still flashing by,
Startle the wanderer who hath listen'd there
To the seer's voice: phantoms of colour'd thought,
Surviving him who raised. O eloquence!
O power, whose breathings thus could wake the dead!

Who shall wake *thee?* lord of the buried past!
And art thou *there*—to those dim nations join'd,
Thy subject host so long?—The wand is dropp'd,
The bright lamp broken, which the gifted hand
Touch'd, and the genii came! Sing reverently
The funeral chant! The mighty is borne home—
And who shall be his mourners? Youth and age,
For each hath felt his magic—love and grief,
For he hath communed with the heart of each:
Yes—the free spirit of humanity
May join the august procession, for to him
Its mysteries have been tributary things,
And all its accents known. From field or wave,
Never was conqueror on his battle-bier,
By the veil'd banner and the muffled drum,
And the proud drooping of the crested head,
More nobly follow'd home. The last abode,
The voiceless dwelling of the bard is reach'd:
A still majestic spot, girt solemnly
With all th' imploring beauty of decay;
A stately couch midst ruins! meet for him
With his bright fame to rest in, as a king
Of other days, laid lonely with his sword
Beneath his head. Sing reverently the chant
Over the honour'd grave. The *grave!*—oh, say
Rather the shrine!—an altar for the love,
The light, soft pilgrim steps, the votive wreaths
Of years unborn—a place where leaf and flower,
By that which dies not of the sovereign dead,
Shall be made holy things, where every weed
Shall have its portion of th' inspiring gift
From buried glory breath'd. And now, what strain,

Making victorious melody ascend
High above sorrow's dirge, befits the tomb
Where he that sway'd the nations thus is laid—
The crown'd of men?
A lowly, lowly song.

Lowly and solemn be
Thy children's cry to thee,
Father divine!
A hymn of suppliant breath,
Owning that life and death
Alike are thine!

A spirit on its way,
Sceptred the earth to sway,
From thee was sent:
Now call'st thou back thine own—
Hence is that radiance flown—
To earth but lent.

Watching in breathless awe,
The bright head bow'd we saw,
Beneath thy hand!
Fill'd by one hope, one fear,
Now o'er a brother's bier,
Weeping we stand.

How hath he pass'd!—the lord
Of each deep bosom chord,
To meet thy sight,
Unmantled and alone,
On thy bless'd mercy thrown,
O Infinite!

So, from his harvest home,
Must the tired peasant come;
So, in one trust,
Leader and king must yield
The naked soul, reveal'd
To thee, All-just!

The sword of many a fight—
What *then* shall be its might?
The lofty lay,
That rush'd on eagle wing—
What shall its memory bring?
What hope, what stay?

O Father! in that hour,
When earth all succouring power
Shall disavow;
When spear, and shield, and crown,
In faintness are cast down—
Sustain us, Thou!

By Him who bow'd to take
The death-cup for our sake,
The thorn, the rod;
From whom the last dismay
Was not to pass away—
Aid us, O God!

Tremblers beside the grave,
We call on thee to save,
Father divine!
Hear, hear our suppliant breath.

Keep us, in life and death,
Thine, only thine!

THE PRAYER IN THE WILDERNESS.

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF CORREGGIO'S.

In the deep wilderness unseen she pray'd,
The daughter of Jerusalem; alone,
With all the still, small whispers of the night,
And with the searching glances of the stars,
And with her God, alone: she lifted up
Her sweet, sad voice, and, trembling o'er her head,
The dark leaves thrill'd with prayer—the tearful prayer
Of woman's quenchless, yet repentant love.

Father of Spirits, hear!
Look on the inmost heart to thee reveal'd,
Look on the fountain of the burning tear,
Before thy sight in solitude unseal'd!

Hear, Father! hear, and aid!
If I have loved too well, if I have shed,
In my vain fondness, o'er a mortal head,
Gifts, on thy shrine, my God! more fitly laid;

If I have sought to live
But in *one* light, and made a human eye
The lonely star of mine idolatry,
Thou that art Love! oh, pity and forgive!

Chasten'd and school'd at last,
No more, no more my struggling spirit burns,
But, fix'd on thee, from that wild worship turns—
What have I said?—the deep dream is not past!

Yet hear!—if *still* I love,
Oh! still too fondly—if, for ever seen,
An earthly image comes, my heart between
And thy calm glory, Father! throned above;

If still a voice is near,
(E'en while I strive these wanderings to control),
An earthly voice disquieting my soul
With its deep music, too intensely dear;

O Father! draw to thee
My lost affections back!—the dreaming eyes
Clear from their mist—sustain the heart that dies,
Give the worn soul once more its pinions free!

I must love on, O God!
This bosom must love on!—but let thy breath
Touch and make pure the flame that knows not death,
Bearing it up to heaven—love's own abode!

Ages and ages past, the wilderness,
With its dark cedars, and the thrilling night,
With her clear stars, and the mysterious winds,
That waft all sound, were conscious of those prayers.
How many such hath woman's bursting heart
Since then, in silence and in darkness breathed,
Like the dim night-flower's odour, up to God!

PRISONERS' EVENING SERVICE.

A SCENE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

"From their spheres
The stars of human glory are cast down;
Perish the roses and the flowers of kings,
Princes and emperors, and the crown and palms
Of all the mighty, wither'd and consumed!
Nor is power given to lowliest innocence
Long to protect her own."

WORDSWORTH.

SCENE—*Prison of the Luxembourg, in Paris, during the Reign of Terror.*

D'AUBIGNÉ, *an aged Royalist*—BLANCHE, *his daughter, a young girl.*

Blanche. What was our doom, my father? In thine arms
I lay unconsciously through that dread hour.
Tell me the sentence! Could our judges look,
Without relenting, on thy silvery hair?
Was there not mercy, father? Will they not
Restore us to our home?

D'Aubigné. Yes, my poor child!
They send us home.

Blanche. Oh! shall we gaze again
On the bright Loire? Will the old hamlet spire,

* The last days of two prisoners in the Luxembourg, Sillery and La Source, so affectingly described by Helen Maria Williams, in her *Letters from France*, gave rise to this little scene. These two victims had composed a simple hymn, which they sang together in a low and restrained voice every night.

And the grey turret of our own chateau,
Look forth to greet us through the dusky elms?
Will the kind voices of our villagers,
The loving laughter in their children's eyes,
Welcome us back at last?—But how is this?
Father, thy glance is clouded—on thy brow
There sits no joy!

D'Aubigné. Upon my brow, dear girl!
There sits, I trust, such deep and solemn peace
As may befit the Christian, who receives
And recognises, in submissive awe,
The summons of his God.

Blanche. Thou dost not mean——
No, no! it cannot be!—Didst thou not say
They sent us *home?*

D'Aubigné. Where is the spirit's home?
Oh! most of all, in these dark evil days,
Where should it be—but in that world serene,
Beyond the sword's reach, and the tempest's power—
Where, but in Heaven?

Blanche. My father!

D'Aubigné. We must die.
We must look up to God, and calmly die.
Come to my heart, and weep there! For awhile
Give Nature's passion way; then brightly rise
In the still courage of a woman's heart!
Do I not know thee? Do I ask too much
From mine own noble Blanche?

Blanche, (falling on his bosom). Oh! clasp me fast!
Thy trembling child! Hide, hide me in thine arms—
Father!

D'Aubigné. Alas! my flower, thou'rt young to go—

Young, and so fair! Yet were it worse, methinks,
To leave thee where the gentle and the brave,
The loyal-hearted and the chivalrous,
And they that loved their God, have all been swept,
Like the sere leaves, away. For them no hearth
Through the wide land was left inviolate,
No altar holy; therefore did they fall,
Rejoicing to depart. The soil is steep'd
In noble blood; the temples are gone down;
The voice of prayer is hush'd, or fearfully
Mutter'd, like sounds of guilt. Why, who would live?
Who hath not panted, as a dove, to flee,
To quit for ever the dishonour'd soil,
The burden'd air? Our God upon the cross—
Our king upon the scaffold*—let us think
Of *these*—and fold endurance to our hearts,
And bravely die!

Blanche. A dark and fearful way!
An evil doom for thy dear honour'd head!
O thou! the kind, the gracious! whom all eyes
Bless'd as they look'd upon! Speak yet again—
Say, will they part us?

D'Aubigné. No, my Blanche; in death
We shall not be divided.

Blanche. Thanks to God!
He, by thy glance, will aid me—I shall see

* A French royalist officer, dying upon a field of battle, and hearing some one near him uttering the most plaintive lamentations, turned towards the sufferer, and thus addressed him:—"My friend, whoever you may be, remember that your God expired upon the cross—your king upon the scaffold—and he who now speaks to you has had his limbs shot from under him. Meet your fate as becomes a man."

His light before me to the last. And when—
O pardon these weak shrinkings of thy child!—
When shall the hour befall?

D'Aubigné. Oh! swiftly now,
And suddenly, with brief, dread interval,
Comes down the mortal stroke. But of that hour
As yet I know not. Each low throbbing pulse
Of the quick pendulum may usher in
Eternity!

Blanche, (kneeling before him). My father! lay thy hand
On thy poor Blanche's head, and once again
Bless her with thy deep voice of tenderness—
Thus breathing saintly courage through her soul,
Ere we are call'd.

D'Aubigné. If I may speak through tears!—
Well may I bless thee, fondly, fervently,
Child of my heart!—thou who dost look on me
With thy lost mother's angel eyes of love!
Thou that hast been a brightness in my path,
A guest of heaven unto my lonely soul,
A stainless lily in my widow'd house,
There springing up, with soft light round thee shed,
For immortality! Meek child of God!
I bless thee—He will bless thee! In His love
He calls thee now from this rude stormy world
To thy Redeemer's breast! And thou wilt die,
As thou hast lived—my duteous, holy Blanche!
In trusting and serene submissiveness,
Humble, yet full of heaven.

Blanche, (rising). Now is there strength

Infused through all my spirit.—I can rise
And say, "Thy will be done!"

D'Aubigné, (*pointing upwards*). See'st thou, my child!

Yon faint light in the west? The signal star
Of our due vesper-service, gleaming in
Through the close dungeon grating! Mournfully
It seems to quiver; yet shall this night pass,
This night alone, without the lifted voice
Of adoration in our narrow cell,
As if unworthy fear or wavering faith
Silenced the strain? No! let it waft to heaven
The prayer, the hope, of poor mortality,
In its dark hour once more! And we will sleep,
Yes—calmly sleep, when our last rite is closed.

[*They sing together.*

PRISONERS' EVENING HYMN.

We see no more in thy pure skies,
How soft, O God! the sunset dies;
How every colour'd hill and wood
Seems melting in the golden flood:
Yet, by the precious memories won
From bright hours now for ever gone,
Father! o'er all thy works, we know,
Thou still art shedding beauty's glow;
Still touching every cloud and tree
With glory, eloquent of thee;
Still feeding all thy flowers with light,
Though man hath barr'd it from our sight.
We know thou reign'st, the Unchanging One, the All-just!
And bless thee still with free and boundless trust!

We read no more, O God! thy ways
On earth, in these wild evil days.
The red sword in the oppressor's hand
Is ruler of the weeping land;
Fallen are the faithful and the pure,
No shrine is spared, no hearth secure.
Yet, by the deep voice from the past,
Which tells us these things cannot last—
And by the hope which finds no ark,
Save in thy breast, when storms grow dark—
We trust thee! As the sailor knows
That in its place of bright repose
His pole-star burns, though mist and cloud
May veil it with a midnight shroud.
We know thou reign'st, All-holy One, all-just!
And bless thee still with love's own boundless trust.

We feel no more that aid is nigh,
When our faint hearts within us die.
We suffer—and we know our doom
Must be one suffering till the tomb.
Yet, by the anguish of thy Son
When his last hour came darkly on,
By his dread cry, the air which rent
In terror of abandonment—
And by his parting word, which rose
Through faith victorious o'er all woes—
We know that thou may'st wound, may'st break
The spirit, but wilt ne'er forsake!
Sad suppliants whom our brethren spurn,
In our deep need to thee we turn!
To whom but thee? All-merciful, All-just!
In life, in death, we yield thee boundless trust!

HYMN OF THE VAUDOIS MOUNTAINEERS IN TIMES OF PERSECUTION.

"Thanks be to God for the mountains."
HOWITT'S *Book of the Seasons.*

FOR the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!
Thou hast made thy children mighty,
By the touch of the mountain-sod.
Thou hast fix'd our ark of refuge
Where the spoiler's foot ne'er trod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

We are watchers of a beacon
Whose light must never die;
We are guardians of an altar
Midst the silence of the sky:
The rocks yield founts of courage,
Struck forth as by thy rod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

For the dark, resounding caverns,
Where thy still, small voice is heard;
For the strong pines of the forests,
That by thy breath are stirr'd;
For the storms, on whose free pinions
Thy spirit walks abroad;

For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

The royal eagle darteth
On his quarry from the heights,
And the stag, that knows no master,
Seeks there his wild delights;
But we, for *thy* communion,
Have sought the mountain-sod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

The banner of the chieftain,
Far, far below us waves;
The war-horse of the spearman
Cannot reach our lofty caves:
Thy dark clouds wrap the threshold
Of freedom's last abode;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

For the shadow of thy presence,
Round our camp of rock outspread;
For the stern defiles of battle,
Bearing record of our dead;
For the snows and for the torrents,
For the free heart's burial-sod;
For the strength of the hills we bless thee,
Our God, our fathers' God!

THE INDIAN'S REVENGE.

SCENE IN THE LIFE OF A MORAVIAN MISSIONARY.*

"But by my wrongs, and by my wrath,
To-morrow Areouski's breath
That fires yon heaven with storms of death,
Shall light me to the foe!"
Indian Song in "Gertrude of Wyoming."

SCENE.—*The shore of a Lake surrounded by deep woods. A solitary cabin on its banks, overshadowed by maple and sycamore trees.* HERRMANN, *the missionary, seated alone before the cabin. The hour is evening twilight.*

Herrmann. Was that the light from some lone swift canoe
Shooting across the waters? No, a flash
From the night's first, quick fire-fly, lost again
In the deep bay of cedars. Not a bark
Is on the wave; no rustle of a breeze
Comes through the forest. In this new, strange world,
Oh! how mysterious, how eternal, seems
The mighty melancholy of the woods!
The desert's own great spirit, infinite!
Little they know, in mine own fatherland,
Along the castled Rhine, or e'en amidst
The wild Harz mountains, or the sylvan glades
Deep in the Odenwald, they little know

* Circumstances similar to those on which this scene is founded, are recorded in Carne's Narrative of the Moravian Missions in Greenland, and gave rise to the dramatic sketch.

Of what is solitude! In hours like this,
There, from a thousand nooks, the cottage-hearths
Pour forth red light through vine-hung lattices,
To guide the peasant, singing cheerily,
On the home path; while round his lowly porch,
With eager eyes awaiting his return,
The cluster'd faces of his children shine
To the clear harvest moon. Be still, fond thoughts
Melting my spirit's grasp from heavenly hope
By your vain earthward yearnings. O my God!
Draw me still nearer, closer unto thee,
Till all the hollow of these deep desires
May with thyself be fill'd! Be it enough
At once to gladden and to solemnise
My lonely life, if for thine altar here
In this dread temple of the wilderness,
By prayer, and toil, and watching, I may win
The offering of one heart, one human heart,
Bleeding, repenting, loving!
Hark! a step,
An Indian tread! I know the stealthy sound—
'Tis on some quest of evil, through the grass
Gliding so serpent-like.

[*He comes forward, and meets an Indian warrior armed.*

Enonio, is it thou? I see thy form
Tower stately through the dusk, yet scarce mine eye
Discerns thy face.

Enonio. My father speaks my name.

Herrmann. Are not the hunters from the chase returned?
The night-fires lit? Why is my son abroad?

Enonio. The warrior's arrow knows of nobler prey
Than elk or deer. Now let my father leave
The lone path free.
Herrmann. The forest way is long
From the red chieftain's home. Rest thee awhile
Beneath my sycamore, and we will speak
Of these things further.
Enonio. Tell me not of rest!
My heart is sleepless, and the dark night swift.
I must begone.
Herrmann, (solemnly). No, warrior, thou must stay!
The Mighty One hath given me power to search
Thy soul with piercing words—and thou must stay,
And hear me, and give answer! If thy heart
Be grown thus restless, is it not because
Within its dark folds thou hast mantled up
Some burning thought of ill?
Enonio, (with sudden impetuosity). How should I rest?—
Last night the spirit of my brother came,
An angry shadow in the moonlight streak,
And said, "*Avenge me!*"—In the clouds this morn
I saw the frowning colour of his blood—
And that, too, had a voice.—I lay at noon
Alone beside the sounding waterfall,
And through its thunder-music spake a tone—
A low tone, piercing all the roll of waves—
And said "*Avenge me!*" Therefore have I raised
The tomahawk, and strung the bow again,
That I may send the shadow from my couch,

And take the strange sound from the cataract,
And sleep once more.

Herrmann. A better path, my son,
Unto the still and dewy land of sleep,
My hand in peace can guide thee—e'en the way
Thy dying brother trod. Say, didst thou love
That lost one well?

Enonio. Know'st thou not we grew up
Even as twin roes amidst the wilderness?
Unto the chase we journey'd in one path;
We stemm'd the lake in one canoe; we lay
Beneath one oak to rest. When fever hung
Upon my burning lips, my brother's hand
Was still beneath my head; my brother's robe
Cover'd my bosom from the chill night-air.
Our lives were girdled by one belt of love
Until he turn'd him from his father's gods,
And then my soul fell from him—then the grass
Grew in the way between our parted homes,
And whereso'er I wander'd, then it seem'd
That all the woods were silent. I went forth—
I journey'd, with my lonely heart, afar,
And so return'd—and where was he?—the earth
Own'd him no more.

Herrmann. But thou thyself, since then,
Hast turn'd thee from the idols of thy tribe,
And, like thy brother, bow'd the suppliant knee
To the one God.

Enonio. Yes, I have learn'd to pray
With my white father's words, yet all the more
My heart, that shut against my brother's love,
Hath been within me as an arrowy fire,

Burning my sleep away. In the night hush,
Midst the strange whispers and dim shadowy things
Of the great forests, I have call'd aloud,
" Brother ! forgive, forgive ! " He answer'd not—
His deep voice, rising from the land of souls,
Cries but "*Avenge me !*"—and I go forth now
To slay his murderer, that when next his eyes
Gleam on me mournfully from that pale shore,
I may look up, and meet their glance, and say,
" I *have* avenged thee."

Herrmann. Oh ! that human love
Should be the root of this dread bitterness,
Till heaven through all the fever'd being pours
Transmuting balsam ! Stay, Enonio, stay !
Thy brother calls thee not ! The spirit world
Where the departed go, sends back to earth
No visitants for evil. 'Tis the might
Of the strong passion, the remorseful grief
At work in thine own breast, which lends the voice
Unto the forest and the cataract,
The angry colour to the clouds of morn,
The shadow to the moonlight. Stay, my son !
Thy brother is at peace. Beside his couch,
When of the murderer's poison'd shaft he died,
I knelt and pray'd ; he named his Saviour's name,
Meekly, beseechingly ; he spoke of thee
In pity and in love.

Enonio, (*hurriedly*). Did he not say
My arrow should avenge him ?

Herrmann. His last words
Were all forgiveness.

Enonio. What ! and shall the man

Who pierced him with the shaft of treachery,
Walk fearless forth in joy?
Herrmann. Was he not once
Thy brother's friend? Oh! trust me, not in *joy*
He walks the frowning forest. Did keen love,
Too late repentant of its heart estranged,
Wake in *thy* haunted bosom, with its train
Of sounds and shadows—and shall *he* escape?
Enonio, dream it not! Our God, the All-just,
Unto himself reserves this royalty—
The secret chastening of the guilty heart,
The fiery touch, the scourge that purifies,
Leave it with him! Yet make it not thy *hope:*
For that strong heart of thine—oh! listen yet—
Must, in its depths, o'ercome the very wish
For death or torture to the guilty one,
Ere it can sleep again.
Enonio. My father speaks
Of change, for man too mighty.
Herrmann. I but speak
Of that which hath been, and again must be,
If thou wouldst join thy brother, in the life
Of the bright country, where, I well believe,
His soul rejoices. *He* had known such change:
He died in peace. He, whom his tribe once named
The Avenging Eagle, took to his meek heart,
In its last pangs, the spirit of those words
Which, from the Saviour's cross, went up to heaven—
"*Forgive them, for they know not what they do!*
Father, forgive!" And o'er the eternal bounds
Of that celestial kingdom, undefiled,
Where evil may not enter, he, I deem,

Hath to his Master pass'd. He waits thee there—
For love, we trust, springs heavenward from the grave,
Immortal in its holiness. He calls
His brother to the land of golden light
And ever-living fountains—couldst thou hear
His voice o'er those bright waters, it would say,
" My brother ! oh ! be pure, be merciful!
That we may meet again."
Enonio, (hesitating). Can I return
Unto my tribe, and unavenged ?
Herrmann. To Him,
To Him return, from whom thine erring steps
Have wander'd far and long ! Return, my son,
To thy Redeemer ! Died he not in love—
The sinless, the divine, the Son of God—
Breathing forgiveness midst all agonies ?
And *we*, dare *we* be ruthless ? By his aid
Shalt thou be guided to thy brother's place
Midst the pure spirits. Oh ! retrace the way
Back to thy Saviour ! he rejects no heart
E'en with the dark stains on it, if true tears
Be o'er them shower'd. Ay, weep, thou Indian chief !
For, by the kindling moonlight, I behold
Thy proud lip's working—weep, relieve thy soul !
Tears will not shame thy manhood, in the hour
Of its great conflict.
Enonio, (giving up his weapons to Herrmann).
Father, take the bow,
Keep the sharp arrows till the hunters call
Forth to the chase once more. And let me dwell

A little while, my father! by thy side,
That I may hear the blessed words again—
Like water-brooks amidst the summer hills—
From thy true lips flow forth; for in my heart
The music and the memory of their sound
Too long have died away.

Herrmann. Oh, welcome back,
Friend, rescued one! Yes, thou shalt be my guest,
And we will pray beneath my sycamore
Together, morn and eve; and I will spread
Thy couch beside my fire, and sleep at last—
After the visiting of holy thoughts—
With dewy wing shall sink upon thine eyes!
Enter my home, and welcome, welcome back
To peace, to God, thou lost and found again!

[*They go into the cabin together.*—HERRMANN, *lingering for a moment on the threshold, looks up to the starry skies.*

Father! that from amidst yon glorious worlds
Now look'st on us, thy children! make this hour
Blessed for ever! May it see the birth
Of thine own image in the unfathom'd deep
Of an immortal soul,—a thing to name
With reverential thought, a solemn world!
To Thee more precious than those thousand stars
Burning on high in thy majestic heaven!

PRAYER AT SEA AFTER VICTORY.

"The land shall never rue,
So England to herself do prove but true."
SHAKESPEARE.

THROUGH evening's bright repose
A voice of prayer arose,
When the sea-fight was done:
The sons of England knelt,
With hearts that now could melt,
For on the wave her battle had been won.

Round their tall ship, the main
Heaved with a dark red stain,
Caught not from sunset's cloud;
While with the tide swept past
Pennon and shiver'd mast,
Which to the Ocean Queen that day had bow'd.

But free and fair on high,
A native of the sky,
Her streamer met the breeze;
It flow'd o'er fearless men,
Though hush'd and childlike then,
Before their God they gather'd on the seas.

Oh! did not thoughts of home
O'er each bold spirit come
As from the land sweet gales?
In every word of prayer
Had not some hearth a share,
Some bower inviolate midst England's vales?

Yes! bright green spots that lay
In beauty far away,
Hearing no billows roar,
Safer from touch of spoil,
For that day's fiery toil,
Rose on high hearts, that now with love gush'd o'er.

A solemn scene and dread!
The victors and the dead,
The breathless burning sky!
And, passing with the race
Of waves that keep no trace,
The wild, brief scenes of human victory!

A stern, yet holy scene!
Billows, where strife hath been,
Sinking to awful sleep;
And words, that breathe the sense
Of God's omnipotence,
Making a minster of that silent deep.

Borne through such hours afar,
Thy flag hath been a star,
Where eagle's wings near flew:
England! the unprofaned,
Thou of the hearths unstain'd,
Oh! to the banner and the shrine be true!

EVENING SONG OF THE WEARY.

FATHER of heaven and earth!
I bless thee for the night,
The soft, still night!
The holy pause of care and mirth,
Of sound and light!

Now far in glade and dell,
Flower-cup, and bud, and bell,
Have shut around the sleeping woodlark's nest;
The bee's long murmuring toils are done,
And I, the o'erwearied one,
O'erwearied and o'erwrought,
Bless thee, O God! O Father of the oppress'd,
With my last waking thought,
In the still night!

Yes, ere I sink to rest,
By the fire's dying light,
Thou Lord of earth and heaven!
I bless thee, who hast given
Unto life's fainting travellers, the night—
The soft, still, holy night!

THE DAY OF FLOWERS.

A MOTHER'S WALK WITH HER CHILD.

"One spirit—His
Who wore the platted thorn with bleeding brows,
Rules universal nature. Not a flower
But shows some touch, in freckle, freak, or stain,
Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odours, and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar.
Happy who walks with him!"

COWPER.

COME to the woods, my boy!
Come to the streams and bowery dingles forth,
My happy child! The spirit of bright hours
Woos us in every wind; fresh wild-leaf scents,
From thickets, where the lonely stock-dove broods,
Enter our lattice; fitful songs of joy
Float in with each soft current of the air;—
And we will hear their summons; we will give
One day to flowers, and sunshine, and glad thoughts,
And thou shalt revel midst free nature's wealth,
And for thy mother twine wild wreaths; while she,
From thy delight, wins to her own fond heart
The vernal ecstasy of childhood back.
Come to the woods, my boy!

What! wouldst thou lead already to the path
Along the copsewood brook? Come, then! in truth
Meet playmate for a child, a blessed child,
Is a glad singing stream, heard or unheard,
Singing its melody of happiness
Amidst the reeds, and bounding in free grace

To that sweet chime. With what a sparkling life
It fills the shadowy dingle! Now the wing
Of some low-skimming swallow shakes bright spray
Forth to the sunshine from its dimpled wave;
Now, from some pool of crystal darkness deep,
The trout springs upward, with a showery gleam
And plashing sound of waters. What swift rings
Of mazy insects o'er the shallow tide
Seem, as they glance, to scatter sparks of light
From burnish'd films! And mark yon silvery line
Of gossamer, so tremulously hung
Across the narrow current, from the tuft
Of hazels to the hoary poplar's bough!
See, in the air's transparence, how it waves,
Quivering and glistening with each faintest gale,
Yet breaking not—a bridge for fairy shapes,
How delicate! how wondrous!
Yes, my boy!
Well may we make the stream's bright winding vein
Our woodland guide, for He who made the stream
Made it a clue to haunts of loveliness,
For ever deepening. Oh, forget him not,
Dear child! that airy gladness which thou feel'st
Wafting thee after bird and butterfly,
As 'twere a breeze within thee, is not less
His gift, his blessing on thy spring-time hours,
Than this rich, outward sunshine, mantling all
The leaves, and grass, and mossy-tinted stones
With summer glory. Stay thy bounding step,
My merry wanderer!—let us rest awhile
By this clear pool, where, in the shadow flung
From alder boughs and osiers o'er its breast,

The soft red of the flowering willow-herb
So vividly is pictured. Seems it not
E'en melting to a more transparent glow
In that pure glass? Oh! beautiful are streams!
And, through all ages, human hearts have loved
Their music, still accordant with each mood
Of sadness or of joy. And love hath grown
Into vain worship, which hath left its trace
On sculptured urn and altar, gleaming still
Beneath dim olive-boughs, by many a fount
Of Italy and Greece. But we will take
Our lesson e'en from erring hearts, which bless'd
The river-deities or fountain-nymphs,
For the cool breeze, and for the freshening shade,
And the sweet water's tune. The One supreme,
The all-sustaining, ever-present God,
Who dower'd the soul with immortality,
Gave also *these* delights, to cheer on earth
Its fleeting passage; therefore let us greet
Each wandering flower-scent as a boon from Him,
Each bird-note, quivering midst light summer leaves,
And every rich celestial tint unnamed,
Wherewith transpierced, the clouds of morn and eve,
Kindle and melt away!
And now, in love,
In grateful thoughts rejoicing, let us bend
Our footsteps onward to the dell of flowers
Around the ruin'd mansion. Thou, my boy!
Not yet, I deem, hast visited that lorn
But lovely spot, whose loveliness for *thee*
Will wear no shadow of subduing thought—
No colouring from the past. This way our path

Winds through the hazels. Mark how brightly shoots
The dragon-fly along the sunbeam's line,
Crossing the leafy gloom. How full of life,
The life of song, and breezes, and free wings,
Is all the murmuring shade! and thine, *oh thine!*
Of all the brightest and the happiest here,
My blessed child! *my* gift of God! that makest
My heart o'erflow with summer!
Hast thou twined
Thy wreath so soon! yet will we loiter not,
Though here the blue-bell wave, and gorgeously
Round the brown, twisted roots of yon scathed oak
The heath-flower spread its purple. We must leave
The copse, and through yon broken avenue,
Shadow'd by drooping walnut foliage, reach
The ruin's glade!
And, lo! before us, fair,
Yet desolate, amidst the golden day,
It stands, that house of silence! wedded now
To verdant nature by the o'ermantling growth
Of leaf and tendril, which fond woman's hands
Once loved to train. How the rich wallflower scent
From every niche and mossy cornice floats,
Embalming its decay! The bee alone
Is murmuring from its casement, whence no more
Shall the sweet eyes of laughing children shine,
Watching some homeward footstep. See! unbound
From the old fretted stone-work, what thick wreaths
Of jasmine, borne by waste exuberance down,
Trail through the grass their gleaming stars, and load

The air with mournful fragrance—for it speaks
Of life gone hence; and the faint southern breath
Of myrtle-leaves from yon forsaken porch,
Startles the soul with sweetness! Yet rich knots
Of garden flowers, far wandering, and self-sown
Through all the sunny hollow, spread around
A flush of youth and joy, free nature's joy,
Undimm'd by human change. How kindly here,
With the low thyme and daisies, they have blent!
And, under arches of wild eglantine,
Drooping from this tall elm, how strangely seems
The frail gum-cistus o'er the turf to snow
Its pearly flower-leaves down! Go, happy boy!
Rove thou at will amidst these roving sweets,
Whilst I, beside this fallen dial-stone,
Under the tall moss-rose tree, long unpruned,
Rest where thick clustering pansies weave around
Their many-tinged mosaic, midst dark grass,
Bedded like jewels.
He hath bounded on,
Wild with delight!—the crimson on his cheek
Purer and richer e'en than that which lies
In this deep-hearted rose-cup! Bright moss-rose!
Though now so lorn, yet surely, gracious tree!
Once thou wert cherish'd! and, by human love,
Through many a summer duly visited
For thy bloom-offerings, which o'er festal board,
And youthful brow, and e'en the shaded couch
Of long-secluded sickness, may have shed
A joy, now lost.
Yet shall there still be joy,
Where God hath pour'd forth beauty, and the voice

Of human love shall still be heard in praise
Over his glorious gifts! O Father! Lord!
The All-beneficent! I bless thy name,
That thou hast mantled the green earth with flowers,
Linking our hearts to nature! By the love
Of their wild blossoms, our young footsteps first
Into her deep recesses are beguiled—
Her minster-cells—dark glen and forest bower,
Where, thrilling with its earliest sense of thee,
Amidst the low, religious whisperings
And shivery leaf-sounds of the solitude,
The spirit wakes to worship, and is made
Thy living temple. By the breath of flowers,
Thou callest us, from city throngs and cares,
Back to the woods, the birds, the mountain-streams,
That sing of Thee! back to free childhood's heart,
Fresh with the dews of tenderness! Thou bidd'st
The lilies of the field with placid smile
Reprove man's feverish strivings, and infuse
Through his worn soul a more unworldly life,
With their soft, holy breath. Thou hast not left
His purer nature, with its fine desires,
Uncared for in this universe of thine!
The glowing rose attests it, the beloved
Of poet hearts, touch'd by their fervent dreams
With spiritual light, and made a source
Of heaven-ascending thoughts. E'en to faint age
Thou lend'st the vernal bliss: the old man's eye
Falls on the kindling blossoms, and his soul
Remembers youth and love, and hopefully
Turns unto thee, who call'st earth's buried germs
From dust to splendour; as the mortal seed

Shall, at thy summons, from the grave spring up
To put on glory, to be girt with power,
And fill'd with immortality. Receive
Thanks, blessings, love, for these, thy lavish boons,
And, most of all, their heavenward influences,
O Thou that gavest us flowers!
Return, my boy!—
With all thy chaplets and bright bands, return!
See, with how deep a crimson eve hath touch'd
And glorified the ruin!—glow-worm light
Will twinkle on the dewdrops, ere we reach
Our home again. Come! with thy last sweet prayer
At thy bless'd mother's knee. To-night shall thanks
Unto our Father in his heaven arise,
For all the gladness, all the beauty shed
O'er one rich day of flowers.

HYMN OF THE TRAVELLER'S HOUSEHOLD ON HIS RETURN,

IN THE OLDEN TIME.

Joy! the lost one is restored!
Sunshine comes to hearth and board.
From the far-off countries old
Of the diamond and red gold;
From the dusky archer-bands,
Roamers of the fiery sands;
From the desert winds, whose breath
Smites with sudden, silent death;

He hath reach'd his home again,
Where we sing
In thy praise a fervent strain,
God our King!

Mightiest! unto Thee he turn'd,
When the noon-day fiercest burn'd:
When the fountain-springs were far,
And the sounds of Arab war
Swell'd upon the sultry blast,
And the sandy columns past,
Unto Thee he cried; and Thou,
Merciful! didst hear his vow!
Therefore unto Thee again
Joy shall sing
Many a sweet and thankful strain,
God our King!

Thou wert with him on the main,
And the snowy mountain-chain,
And the rivers, dark and wide,
Which through Indian forests glide:
Thou didst guard him from the wrath
Of the lion in his path,
And the arrows on the breeze,
And the drooping poison-trees:
Therefore from our household train
Oft shall spring
Unto thee a blessing strain,
God our King!

Thou to his lone watching wife
Hast brought back the light of life!

Thou hast spared his loving child
Home to greet him from the wild.
Though the suns of eastern skies
On his cheek have set their dyes,
Though long toils and sleepless cares
On his brow have blanch'd the hairs,
Yet the night of fear is flown,
He is living and our own!
Brethren! spread his festal board,
Hang his mantle and his sword
With the armour on the wall—
While this long, long silent hall
Joyfully doth hear again
Voice and string
Swell to Thee the exulting strain,
God our King!

A PRAYER OF AFFECTION.

Blessings, O Father! shower—
Father of Mercies! round his precious head!
On his lone walks and on his thoughtful hour,
And the pure visions of his midnight bed,
Blessings be shed!

Father! I pray Thee not
For earthly treasure to that most beloved—
Fame, fortune, power: oh! be his spirit proved
By these, or by their absence, at Thy will!
But let Thy peace be wedded to his lot,

Guarding his inner life from touch of ill,
With its dove-pinion still!
Let such a sense of Thee,
Thy watching presence, thy sustaining love,
His bosom guest inalienably be,
That wheresoe'er he move,
A heavenly light serene
Upon his heart and mien
May sit undimm'd! a gladness rest his own,
Unspeakable, and to the world unknown!
Such as from childhood's morning land of dreams,
Remember'd faintly, gleams—
Faintly remember'd, and too swiftly flown!

So let him walk with Thee,
Made by thy Spirit free;
And when Thou call'st him from his mortal place,
To his last hour be still that sweetness given,
That joyful trust! and brightly let him part,
With lamp clear-burning, and unlingering heart,
Mature to meet in heaven
His Saviour's face!

THE PAINTER'S LAST WORK.*

"Clasp me a little longer on the brink
Of life, while I can feel thy dear caress;
And when this heart hath ceased to beat, oh! think,
And let it mitigate thy woe's excess,
That thou hast been to me all tenderness,
And friend to more than human friendship just—

* Suggested by the closing scene in the life of the painter Blake, which is beautifully related by Allan Cunningham.

Oh! by that retrospect of happiness,
And by the hope of an immortal trust,
God shall assuage thy pangs when I am laid in dust!"
CAMPBELL.

The Scene is an English Cottage. The lattice opens upon a landscape at sunset.

EUGENE—TERESA.

Teresa. The fever's hue hath left thy cheek, beloved!
Thine eyes, that make the dayspring in my heart,
Are clear and still once more! Wilt thou look forth?
Now, while the sunset with low streaming light—
The light thou lovest—hath made the elm-wood stems
All burning bronze, the river molten gold!
Wilt thou be raised upon thy couch, to meet
The rich air fill'd with wandering scents and sounds?
Or shall I lay thy dear, dear head once more
On this true bosom, lulling thee to rest
With our own evening hymn?

Eugene. Not now, dear love!
My soul is wakeful—lingering to look forth,
Not on the sun, but thee! Doth the light sleep
On the stream tenderly? and are the stems
Of our own elm-trees, by its alchemy,
So richly changed? and is the sweet-brier scent
Floating around? But I have said farewell,
Farewell to earth, Teresa!—not to thee;
Nor yet to our deep love—nor yet awhile
Unto the spirit of mine art, which flows

Back on my soul in mastery. One last work!
And I will shrine my wealth of glowing thoughts,
Clinging affections, and undying hopes,
All, all in that memorial!

Teresa. O, what dream
Is this, mine own Eugene? Waste thou not thus
Thy scarce-returning strength; keep thy rich thoughts
For happier days—they will not melt away
Like passing music from the lute. Dear friend!
Dearest of friends! thou canst win back at will
The glorious visions.

Eugene. Yes! the unseen land
Of glorious visions hath sent forth a voice
To call me hence. Oh, be thou not deceived!
Bind to thy heart no *earthly* hope, Teresa!
I must, *must* leave thee! Yet be strong, my love,
As thou hast still been gentle.

Teresa. O Eugene!
What will this dim world be to me, Eugene,
When wanting thy bright soul, the life of all—
My only sunshine? How can I bear on?
How can we part?—we that have loved so well—
With clasping spirits link'd so long by grief,
By tears, by prayer?

Eugene. E'en *therefore* we can part,
With an immortal trust, that such high love
Is not of things to perish.
Let me leave
One record still of its ethereal flame
Brightening thro' death's cold shadow. Once again,
Stand with thy meek hands folded on thy breast,

'And eyes half veil'd, in thine own soul absorb'd,
As in thy watchings, ere I sink to sleep;
And I will give the bending flower-like grace
Of that soft form, and the still sweetness throned
On that pale brow, and in that quivering smile
Of voiceless love, a life that shall outlast
Their delicate earthly being. There! thy head
Bow'd down with beauty, and with tenderness,
And lowly thought—even thus—my own Teresa!
Oh! the quick-glancing radiance and bright bloom
That once around thee hung, have melted now
Into more solemn light—but holier far,
And dearer, and yet lovelier in mine eyes,
Than all that summer flush! For by my couch,
In patient and serene devotedness,
Thou hast made those rich hues and sunny smiles
Thine offering unto me. Oh! I may give
Those pensive lips, that clear Madonna brow,
And the sweet earnestness of that dark eye,
Unto the canvass; I may catch the flow
Of all those drooping locks, and glorify
With a soft halo what is imaged thus—
But how much rests unbreathed, my faithful one!
What thou hast been to me! This bitter world!
This cold unanswering world, that hath no voice
To greet the gentle spirit, that drives back
All birds of Eden, which would sojourn here
A little while—how have I turn'd away
From its keen soulless air, and in thy heart
Found ever the sweet fountain of response,
To quench my thirst for home!

The dear work grows
Beneath my hand—the last!
Teresa, (*falling on his neck in tears*).
Eugene! Eugene!
Break not my heart with thine excess of love!—
Oh! must I lose thee—thou that hast been still
The tenderest—best!
Eugene. Weep, weep not thus, beloved!
Let my true heart o'er thine retain its power
Of soothing to the last! Mine own Teresa!
Take strength from strong affection! Let our souls,
Ere this brief parting, mingle in one strain
Of deep, full thanksgiving, for God's rich boon—
Our perfect love! Oh, blessed have we been
In that high gift! Thousands o'er earth may pass
With hearts unfreshen'd by the heavenly dew,
Which hath kept *ours* from withering. Kneel, true wife!
And lay thy hands in mine.
[*She kneels beside the couch—he prays.*
Oh, thus receive
Thy children's thanks, Creator! for the love
Which thou hast granted, through all earthly woes,
To spread heaven's peace around them—which hath bound
Their spirits to each other and to thee,
With links whereon unkindness ne'er hath breath'd,
Nor wandering thought. We thank thee, gracious God!
For all its treasured memories, tender cares,

Fond words, bright, bright sustaining looks, unchanged
Through tears and joy! O Father! most of all
We thank, we bless Thee, for the priceless trust,
Through Thy redeeming Son vouchsafed to those
That love in Thee, of union, in Thy sight,
And in Thy heavens, immortal! Hear our prayer!
Take home our fond affections, purified
To spirit radiance from all earthly stain;
Exalted, solemnised, made fit to dwell,
Father! where all things that are lovely meet,
And all things that are pure—for evermore,
With Thee and Thine!

MOTHER'S LITANY BY THE SICK-BED OF A CHILD.

SAVIOUR! that of woman born,
Mother-sorrow didst not scorn,
Thou, with whose last anguish strove
One dear thought of earthly love—
Hear and aid!

Low he lies, my precious child,
With his spirit wandering wild
From its gladsome tasks and play,
And its bright thoughts far away—
Saviour, aid!

Pain sits heavy on his brow,
E'en though slumber seal it now;

Round his lip is quivering strife,
In his hand unquiet life—
Aid! oh, aid!

Saviour! loose the burning chain
From his fever'd heart and brain;
Give, oh! give his young soul back,
Into its own cloudless track!
Hear and aid!

Thou that saidst, "Awake, arise!"
E'en when death had quench'd the eyes—
In this hour of grief's deep sighing,
When o'erwearied hope is dying,
Hear and aid!

Yet, oh! make him thine, all thine,
Saviour! whether death's or mine!
Yet, oh! pour on human love
Strength, trust, patience, from above!
Hear and aid!

NIGHT HYMN AT SEA.

THE WORDS WRITTEN FOR A MELODY BY FELTON.

NIGHT sinks on the wave,
Hollow gusts are sighing,
Sea-birds to their cave
Through the gloom are flying.
Oh! should storms come sweeping,

Thou, in heaven unsleeping,
O'er thy children vigil keeping,
Hear, hear, and save!

Stars look o'er the sea,
Few and sad, and shrouded;
Faith our light must be,
When all else is clouded.
Thou, whose voice came thrilling,
Wind and billow stilling,
Speak once more! our prayer fulfilling—
Power dwells with Thee!

FEMALE CHARACTERS OF SCRIPTURE.

A SERIES OF SONNETS.*

"Your tents are desolate; your stately steps,
Of all their choral dances, have not left
One trace beside the fountains: your full cup
Of gladness and of trembling, each alike
Is broken. Yet, amidst undying things,
The mind still keeps your loveliness, and still
All the fresh glories of the early world
Hang round you in the spirit's pictured halls,
Never to change!"

I.—INVOCATION.

As the tired voyager on stormy seas
Invokes the coming of bright birds from shore,
To waft him tidings, with the gentler breeze,
Of dim sweet woods that hear no billows roar;

* Suggested by the perusal of Mrs Sandford's *Woman*.

So, from the depth of days, when earth yet wore
Her solemn beauty and primeval dew,
I call you, gracious Forms! Oh, come! restore
Awhile that holy freshness, and renew
Life's morning dreams. Come with the voice, the lyre,
Daughters of Judah! with the timbrel rise!
Ye of the dark prophetic eastern eyes,
Imperial in their visionary fire;
Oh! steep my soul in that old glorious time,
When God's own whisper shook the cedars of your clime!

II.—INVOCATION CONTINUED.

And come, ye faithful! round Messiah seen,
With a soft harmony of tears and light
Streaming through all your spiritual mien,
As in calm clouds of pearly stillness bright,
Showers weave with sunshine, and transpierce their slight
Ethereal cradle. From *your* heart subdued
All haughty dreams of power had wing'd their flight,
And left high place for martyr fortitude,
True faith, long-suffering love. Come to me, come!
And, as the seas beneath your master's tread
Fell into crystal smoothness, round him spread
Like the clear pavement of his heavenly home;
So in your presence, let the soul's great deep
Sink to the gentleness of infant sleep.

III.—THE SONG OF MIRIAM.

A SONG for Israel's God! Spear, crest, and helm,
Lay by the billows of the old Red Sea,
When Miriam's voice o'er that sepulchral realm
Sent on the blast a hymn of jubilee.
With her lit eye, and long hair floating free,
Queen-like she stood, and glorious was the strain,
E'en as instinct with the tempestuous glee
Of the dark waters, tossing o'er the slain.

A song for God's own victory! Oh, thy lays,
Bright poesy! were holy in their birth:
How hath it died, thy seraph-note of praise,
In the bewildering melodies of earth!
Return from troubling bitter founts—return,
Back to the life-springs of thy native urn!

IV.—RUTH.

THE plume-like swaying of the auburn corn,
By soft winds to a dreamy motion fann'd,
Still brings me back thine image—O forlorn,
Yet not forsaken, Ruth! I see thee stand
Lone, midst the gladness of the harvest band—
Lone, as a wood-bird on the ocean's foam,
Fallen in its weariness. Thy fatherland
Smiles far away! yet to the sense of home—
That finest, purest, which can recognise
Home in affection's glance—for ever true

Beats thy calm heart; and if thy gentle eyes
Gleam tremulous through tears, 'tis not to rue
Those words, immortal in their deep love's tone,
"*Thy people and thy God shall be mine own!*"

V.—THE VIGIL OF RIZPAH.

"And Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven; and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night."
2 SAM. xxi. 10.

WHO watches on the mountain with the dead,
Alone before the awfulness of night?—
A seer awaiting the deep spirit's might?
A warrior guarding some dark pass of dread?
No—a lorn woman! On her drooping head,
Once proudly graceful, heavy beats the rain;
She recks not—living for the unburied slain,
Only to scare the vulture from their bed.

So, night by night, her vigil hath she kept
With the pale stars, and with the dews hath wept:
Oh! surely some bright Presence from above
On those wild rocks the lonely one must aid!
E'en so; a strengthener through all storm and shade,
Th' unconquerable angel, mightiest love!

VI.—THE REPLY OF THE SHUNAMMITE WOMAN.

"And she answered, I dwell among mine own people."
2 KINGS, iv. 13.

"I DWELL among mine own,"—oh, happy thou!
Not for the sunny clusters of the vine,
Not for the olives on the mountain's brow;
Nor the flocks wandering by the flowery line
Of streams, that make the green land where they shine
Laugh to the light of waters—not for these,
Nor the soft shadow of ancestral trees,
Whose kindly whisper floats o'er thee and thine—
Oh! not for *these* I call thee richly blest,
But for the meekness of thy woman's breast,
Where that sweet depth of still contentment lies;
And for thy holy household love, which clings
Unto all ancient and familiar things,
Weaving from each some link for home's dear charities.

VII.—THE ANNUNCIATION.

LOWLIEST of women, and most glorified!
In thy still beauty sitting calm and lone,
A brightness round thee grew—and by thy side,
Kindling the air, a form ethereal shone,
Solemn, yet breathing gladness. From her throne
A queen had risen with more imperial eye,

A stately prophetess of victory
From her proud lyre had struck a tempest's tone,
For such high tidings as to *thee* were brought,
Chosen of Heaven! that hour: but thou, oh! thou,
E'en as a flower with gracious rains o'erfraught,
Thy virgin head beneath its crown didst bow,
And take to thy meek breast th' all-holy word,
And own thyself *the handmaid of the Lord.*

VIII.—THE SONG OF THE VIRGIN.

YET as a sunburst flushing mountain-snow,
Fell the celestial touch of fire ere long
On the pale stillness of thy thoughtful brow,
And thy calm spirit lighten'd into song.
Unconsciously, perchance, yet free and strong
Flow'd the majestic joy of tuneful words,
Which living harps the choirs of heaven among
Might well have link'd with their divinest chords.
Full many a strain, borne far on glory's blast,
Shall leave, where once its haughty music pass'd,
No more to memory than a reed's faint sigh;
While thine, O childlike Virgin! through all time
Shall send its fervent breath o'er every clime,
Being of God, and therefore not to die.

IX.—THE PENITENT ANOINTING CHRIST'S FEET.

THERE was a mournfulness in angel eyes,
That saw thee, woman! bright in this world's train,
Moving to pleasure's airy melodies,
Thyself the idol of the enchanted strain.
But from thy beauty's garland, brief and vain,
When one by one the rose-leaves had been torn,
When thy heart's core had quiver'd to the pain
Through every life-nerve sent by arrowy scorn;
When thou didst kneel to pour sweet odours forth,
On the Redeemer's feet, with many a sigh,
And showering tear-drop, of yet richer worth
Than all those costly balms of Araby;
Then was there joy, a song of joy in heaven,
For thee, the child won back, the penitent forgiven!

X.—MARY AT THE FEET OF CHRIST.

OH! bless'd beyond all daughters of the earth!
What were the Orient's thrones to that low seat
Where thy hush'd spirit drew celestial birth,
Mary! meek listener at the Saviour's feet?
No feverish cares to that divine retreat
Thy woman's heart of silent worship brought,
But a fresh childhood, heavenly truth to meet,
With love, and wonder, and submissive thought.
Oh! for the holy quiet of thy breast,
Midst the world's eager tones and footsteps flying,
Thou, whose calm soul was like a well-spring, lying

So deep and still in its transparent rest,
That e'en when noontide burns upon the hills,
Some one bright solemn star all its lone mirror fills.

XI.—THE SISTERS OF BETHANY AFTER THE DEATH OF LAZARUS.

One grief, one faith, O sisters of the dead!
Was in your bosoms—thou, whose steps, made fleet
By keen hope fluttering in the heart which bled,
Bore thee, as wings, the Lord of Life to greet;
And thou, that duteous in thy still retreat
Didst wait his summons, then with reverent love
Fall weeping at the bless'd Deliverer's feet,
Whom e'en to heavenly tears thy woe could move.
And which to *Him*, the All-seeing and All-just,
Was loveliest, that quick zeal, or lowly trust?
Oh! question not, and let no law be given
To those unveilings of its deepest shrine,
By the wrung spirit made in outward sign:
Free service from the heart is all in all to Heaven.

XII.—THE MEMORIAL OF MARY.

"Verily I say unto you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her."—Matthew, xxvi. 13.—See also John, xii. 3.

Thou hast thy record in the monarch's hall,
And on the waters of the far mid sea;

And where the mighty mountain-shadows fall,
The Alpine hamlet keeps a thought of thee:
Where'er, beneath some Oriental tree,
The Christian traveller rests—where'er the child
Looks upward from the English mother's knee,
With earnest eyes in wondering reverence mild,
There art thou known—where'er the Book of light
Bears hope and healing, there, beyond all blight,
Is borne thy memory, and all praise above.
Oh! say what deed so lifted thy sweet name,
Mary! to that pure, silent place of fame?
One lowly offering of exceeding love.

XIII.—THE WOMEN OF JERUSALEM AT THE CROSS.

Like those pale stars of tempest hours, whose gleam
Waves calm and constant on the rocking mast,
Such by the cross doth your bright lingering seem,
Daughters of Zion! faithful to the last!
Ye, through the darkness o'er the wide earth cast
By the death-cloud within the Saviour's eye,
E'en till away the heavenly spirit pass'd,
Stood in the shadow of his agony.
O blessed faith! a guiding lamp, that hour
Was lit for woman's heart! to her, whose dower
Is all of love and suffering from her birth,
Still hath your act a voice—through fear, through strife,
Bidding her bind each tendril of her life
To that which her deep soul hath proved of holiest worth.

XIV.—MARY MAGDALENE AT THE SEPULCHRE.

WEEPER! to thee how bright a morn was given
After thy long, long vigil of despair,
When that high voice which burial rocks had riven
Thrill'd with immortal tones the silent air!
Never did clarion's royal blast declare
Such tale of victory to a breathless crowd,
As the deep sweetness of *one* word could bear
Into thy heart of hearts, O woman! bow'd
By strong affection's anguish! one low word—
"*Mary!*" and all the triumph wrung from death
Was thus reveal'd; and thou, that so hadst err'd,
So wept, and been forgiven, in trembling faith
Didst cast thee down before the all-conquering Son,
Awed by the mighty gift thy tears and love had won!

XV.—MARY MAGDALENE BEARING TIDINGS OF THE RESURRECTION.

THEN was a task of glory all thine own,
Nobler than e'er the still, small voice assign'd
To lips in awful music making known
The stormy splendours of some prophet's mind.
"Christ is arisen!"—by thee, to wake mankind,
First from the sepulchre those words were brought!
Thou wert to send the mighty rushing wind

First on its way, with those high tidings fraught—
"*Christ is arisen!*" Thou, *thou*, the sin-enthrall'd!
Earth's outcast, heaven's own ransom'd one, wert call'd
In human hearts to give that rapture birth:
Oh raised from shame to brightness! *there* doth lie
The tenderest meaning of *His* ministry,
Whose undespairing love still own'd the spirit's worth.

THE TWO MONUMENTS.*

"Oh! bless'd are they who live and die like 'him,'
Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourn'd!"
WORDSWORTH.

BANNERS hung drooping from on high
In a dim cathedral's nave,
Making a gorgeous canopy
O'er a noble, noble grave!

And a marble warrior's form beneath,
With helm and crest array'd,
As on his battle-bed of death,
Lay in their crimson shade.

Triumph yet linger'd in his eye,
Ere by the dark night seal'd;

* Suggested by a passage in Captain Sherer's "Notes and Reflections during a Ramble in Germany."

And his head was pillow'd haughtily
On standard and on shield.

And shadowing that proud trophy-pile,
With the glory of his wing,
An eagle sat—yet seem'd the while
Panting through heaven to spring.

He sat upon a shiver'd lance,
There by the sculptor bound;
But in the light of his lifted glance
Was *that* which scorn'd the ground.

And a burning flood of gem-like hues
From a storied window pour'd,
There fell, there centred, to suffuse
The conqueror and his sword.

A flood of hues—but *one* rich dye
O'er all supremely spread,
With a purple robe of royalty
Mantling the mighty dead.

Meet was that robe for *him* whose name
Was a trumpet-note in war,
His pathway still the march of fame,
His eye the battle-star.

But faintly, tenderly was thrown,
From the colour'd light, one ray,
Where a low and pale memorial-stone
By the couch of glory lay.

Few were the fond words chisell'd *there,*
Mourning for parted worth;
But the very heart of love and prayer
Had given their sweetness forth.

They spoke of one whose life had been
As a hidden streamlet's course,
Bearing on health and joy unseen
From its clear mountain-source:

Whose young, pure memory, lying deep
Midst rock, and wood, and hill,
Dwelt in the homes where poor men sleep,*
A soft light, meek and still:

Whose gentle voice, too early call'd
Unto music's land away,
Had won for God the earth's enthrall'd,
By words of silvery sway.

These were *his* victories—yet, enroll'd
In no high song of fame,
The pastor of the mountain-fold
Left but to heaven his name.

To heaven, and to the peasant's hearth,
A blessed household-sound—
And finding lowly love on earth,
Enough, enough he found!

* "Love had he seen in huts where poor men lie."
WORDSWORTH.

Bright and more bright before me gleam'd
That sainted image still,
Till one sweet moonlight memory seem'd
The regal fane to fill.

Oh! how my silent spirit turn'd
From those proud trophies nigh!
How my full heart within me burn'd
Like *Him* to live and die!

THE COTTAGE GIRL.

A CHILD beside a hamlet's fount at play,
Her fair face laughing at the sunny day;
A gush of waters tremulously bright,
Kindling the air to gladness with their light;
And a soft gloom beyond of summer trees,
Darkening the turf; and, shadow'd o'er by these,
A low, dim, woodland cottage—this was all!
What had the scene for memory to recall
With a fond look of love! What secret spell
With the heart's pictures made its image dwell?

What but the spirit of the joyous child,
That freshly forth o'er stream and verdure smiled,
Casting upon the common things of earth
A brightness, born and gone with infant mirth!

THE BATTLE-FIELD.

I LOOK'D on the field where the battle was spread,
When thousands stood forth in their glancing array;
And the beam from the steel of the valiant was shed
Through the dun-rolling clouds that o'ershadow'd the fray.

I saw the dark forest of lances appear,
As the ears of the harvest unnumber'd they stood;
I heard the stern shout as the foemen drew near,
Like the storm that lays low the proud pines of the wood.

Afar the harsh notes of the war-drum were roll'd,
Uprousing the wolf from the depth of his lair;
On high to the gust stream'd the banner's red fold,
O'er the death-close of hate, and the scowl of despair.

I look'd on the field of contention again,
When the sabre was sheath'd and the tempest had past;
The wild weed and thistle grew rank on the plain,
And the fern softly sigh'd in the low, wailing blast.

Unmoved lay the lake in its hour of repose,
And bright shone the stars through the sky's deepen'd blue;
And sweetly the song of the night-bird arose,
Where the fox-glove lay gemm'd with its pearl-drops of dew.

But where swept the ranks of that dark, frowning
host,
As the ocean in might, as the storm-cloud in speed?
Where now are the thunders of victory's boast—
The slayer's dread wrath, and the strength of the
steed?

Not a time-wasted cross, not a mouldering stone,
To mark the lone scene of their shame or their pride;
One grass-cover'd mound told the traveller alone,
Where thousands lay down in their anguish, and died!

Oh, Glory! behold thy famed guerdon's extent:
For this, toil thy slaves through their earth-wasting
lot—
A name like the mist, when the night-beams are
spent;
A grave with its tenants unwept and forgot!

A PENITENT'S RETURN.

"Can guilt or misery ever enter here?
Ah, no! the spirit of domestic peace,
Though calm and gentle as the brooding dove,
And ever murmuring forth a quiet song,
Guards, powerful as the sword of cherubim,
The hallow'd porch. She hath a heavenly smile,
That sinks into the sullen soul of Vice,
And wins him o'er to virtue."

WILSON.

My father's house once more,
In its own moonlight beauty! Yet around,
Something, amidst the dewy calm profound,
Broods, never mark'd before!

Is it the brooding night?
Is it the shivery creeping on the air,
That makes the home, so tranquil and so fair,
O'erwhelming to my sight?

All solemnised it seems,
And still'd, and darken'd in each time-worn hue,
Since the rich, clustering roses met my view,
As now, by starry gleams.

And this high elm, where last
I stood and linger'd—where my sisters made
Our mother's bower—I deem'd not that it cast
So far and dark a shade!

How spirit-like a tone
Sighs through yon tree! My father's place was there
At evening hours, while soft winds waved his hair!
Now those grey locks are gone!

My soul grows faint with fear!
Even as if angel-steps had mark'd the sod.
I tremble where I move—the voice of God
Is in the foliage here!

Is it indeed the night
That makes my home so awful? Faithless-hearted!
'Tis that from thine own bosom hath departed
The inborn, gladd'ning light!

No outward thing is changed;
Only the joy of purity is fled,

And, long from nature's melodies estranged,
Thou hear'st their tones with dread.

Therefore the calm abode,
By thy dark spirit, is o'erhung with shade;
And therefore, in the leaves, the voice of God
Makes thy sick heart afraid!

The night-flowers round that door
Still breathe pure fragrance on the untainted air;
Thou, thou alone art worthy now no more
To pass, and rest thee there.

And must I turn away?—
Hark, hark!—it is my mother's voice I hear—
Sadder than once it seem'd—yet soft and clear;—
Doth she not seem to pray?

My name!—I caught the sound!
Oh! blessed tone of love—the deep, the mild!
Mother! my mother! Now receive thy child:
Take back the lost and found!

A THOUGHT OF PARADISE.

" We receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live;
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud:
And, would we aught behold of higher worth
Than that inanimate, cold world allow'd
To the poor, loveless, ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud,
Enveloping the earth;
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element."

COLERIDGE.

GREEN spot of holy ground!
If thou couldst yet be found,
Far in deep woods, with all thy starry flowers;
If not one sullying breath
Of time, or change, or death,
Had touch'd the vernal glory of thy bowers;

Might our tired pilgrim-feet,
Worn by the desert's heat,
On the bright freshness of thy turf repose?
Might our eyes wander there
Through heaven's transparent air,
And rest on colours of the immortal rose?

Say, would thy balmy skies
And fountain-melodies
Our heritage of lost delight restore?
Could thy soft honey-dews
Through all our veins diffuse
The early, child-like, trustful sleep once more?

And might we, in the shade
By thy tall cedars made,
With angel-voices high communion hold?
Would their sweet, solemn tone
Give back the music gone,
Our Being's harmony, so jarr'd of old?

Oh no!—thy sunny hours
Might come with blossom-showers,
All thy young leaves to spirit-lyres might thrill;
But *we*—should we not bring
Into thy realms of spring
The shadows of our souls to haunt us still?

What could *thy* flowers and airs
Do for our earth-born cares?
Would the world's chain melt off and leave us free?
No!—past each living stream,
Still would some fever-dream
Track the lorn wanderers, meet no more for thee!

Should we not shrink with fear
If angel-steps were near,
Feeling our burden'd souls within us die?
How might our passions brook
The still and searching look,
The starlike glance of seraph purity?

Thy golden-fruited grove
Was not for pining love;
Vain sadness would but dim thy crystal skies!

Oh ! *thou* wert but a part
Of what man's exiled heart
Hath lost—the dower of *inborn* Paradise !

LET US DEPART !

[It is mentioned by Josephus, that, a short time previous to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, the priests, going by night into the inner court of the Temple to perform their sacred ministrations at the Feast of Pentecost, felt a quaking, and heard a rushing noise, and, after that, a sound as of a great multitude saying, "Let us depart hence !"]

NIGHT hung on Salem's towers,
And a brooding hush profound
Lay where the Roman eagle shone,
High o'er the tents around—

The tents that rose by thousands,
In the moonlight glimmering pale ;
Like white waves of a frozen sea
Filling an Alpine vale.

And the Temple's massy shadow
Fell broad, and dark, and still,
In peace—as if the Holy One
Yet watched his chosen hill.

But a fearful sound was heard
In that old fane's deepest heart,

As if mighty wings rush'd by,
And a dread voice raised the cry,
" Let us depart ! "

Within the fated city
E'en then fierce discord raved,
Though o'er night's heaven the comet-sword
Its vengeful token waved.

There were shouts of kindred warfare
Through the dark streets ringing high,
Though every sign was full which told
Of the bloody vintage nigh ;

Though the wild red spears and arrows
Of many a meteor host,
Went flashing o'er the holy stars,
In the sky now seen, now lost.

And that fearful sound was heard
In the Temple's deepest heart,
As if mighty wings rush'd by,
And a voice cried mournfully,
" Let us depart ! "

But within the fated city
There was revelry that night—
The wine-cup and the timbrel note,
And the blaze of banquet-light.

The footsteps of the dancer
Went bounding through the hall,

And the music of the dulcimer
Summon'd to festival:

While the clash of brother-weapons
Made lightning in the air,
And the dying at the palace gates
Lay down in their despair;

And that fearful sound was heard
At the Temple's thrilling heart,
As if mighty wings rush'd by,
And a dread voice raised the cry,
"*Let us depart!*"

ON A PICTURE OF CHRIST BEARING THE CROSS.

PAINTED BY VELASQUEZ.*

By the dark stillness brooding in the sky,
Holiest of sufferers! round thy path of woe,
And by the weight of mortal agony
Laid on thy drooping form and pale meek brow,
My heart was awed: the burden of thy pain
Sank on me with a mystery and a chain.

I look'd once more—and, as the virtue shed
Forth from thy robe of old, so fell a ray

* This picture is in the possession of the Viscount Harberton, Merrion Square, Dublin.

Of victory from thy mien! and round thy head,
The halo, melting spirit-like away,
Seem'd of the very soul's bright rising born,
To glorify all sorrow, shame, and scorn.

And upwards, through transparent darkness gleaming,
Gazed in mute reverence woman's earnest eye,
Lit, as a vase whence inward light is streaming,
With quenchless faith, and deep love's fervency,
Gathering, like incense, round some dim-veil'd shrine,
About the form, so mournfully divine!

Oh! let thine image, as e'en then it rose,
Live in my soul for ever, calm and clear,
Making itself a temple of repose,
Beyond the breath of human hope or fear!
A holy place, where through all storms may lie
One living beam of dayspring from on high.

COMMUNINGS WITH THOUGHT.

> "Could we but keep our spirits to that height,
> We might be happy; but this clay will sink
> Its spark immortal."
>
> BYRON.

RETURN, my thoughts—come home!
Ye wild and wing'd! what do ye o'er the deep?
And wherefore thus the abyss of time o'ersweep,
As birds the ocean-foam?

Swifter than shooting-star,
Swifter than lances of the northern light,
Upspringing through the purple heaven of night,
Hath been your course afar!

Through the bright battle-clime,
Where laurel boughs make dim the Grecian streams,
And reeds are whispering of heroic themes,
By temples of old time:

Through the north's ancient halls,
Where banners thrill'd of yore—where harp-strings rung;
But grass waves now o'er those that fought and sung—
Hearth-light hath left their walls!

Through forests old and dim,
Where o'er the leaves dread magic seems to brood;
And sometimes on the haunted solitude
Rises the pilgrim's hymn:

Or where some fountain lies,
With lotus-cups through orient spice-woods gleaming!
There have ye been, ye wanderers! idly dreaming
Of man's lost paradise!

Return, my thoughts—return!
Cares wait your presence in life's daily track,
And voices, not of music, call you back—
Harsh voices, cold and stern!

Oh, no ! return ye not !
Still farther, loftier, let your soarings be !
Go, bring me strength from journeyings bright and free,
O'er many a haunted spot.

Go ! seek the martyr's grave,
Midst the old mountains, and the deserts vast ;
Or, through the ruin'd cities of the past,
Follow the wise and brave !

Go ! visit cell and shrine,
Where woman hath endured !—through wrong, through scorn,
Uncheer'd by fame, yet silently upborne
By promptings more divine !

Go, shoot the gulf of death !
Track the pure spirit where no chain can bind,
Where the heart's boundless love its rest may find,
Where the storm sends no breath !

Higher, and yet more high !
Shake off the cumbering chain which earth would lay
On your victorious wings—mount, mount ! Your way
Is through eternity !

SONNETS,

DEVOTIONAL AND MEMORIAL.

I.—THE SACRED HARP.

How shall the harp of poesy regain
  That old victorious tone of prophet-years—
  A spell divine o'er guilt's perturbing fears,
And all the hovering shadows of the brain?
Dark, evil wings took flight before the strain,
  And showers of holy quiet, with its fall,
  Sank on the soul. Oh! who may now recall
The mighty music's consecrated reign?
Spirit of God! whose glory once o'erhung
  A throne, the ark's dread cherubim between,
  So let thy presence brood, though now unseen,
O'er those two powers by whom the harp is strung,
Feeling and Thought! till the rekindled chords
Give the long-buried tone back to immortal words.

II.—TO A FAMILY BIBLE.

What household thoughts around thee, as their shrine,
  Cling reverently? Of anxious looks beguiled,

My mother's eyes upon thy page divine,
  Each day were bent—her accents, gravely mild,
  Breathed out thy lore: whilst I, a dreamy child,
Wandered on breeze-like fancies oft away,
  To some lone tuft of gleaming spring-flowers wild,
Some fresh-discover'd nook for woodland play,
Some secret nest. Yet would the solemn Word,
At times, with kindlings of young wonder heard,
  Fall on my wakened spirit, there to be
A seed not lost,—for which, in darker years,
O Book of Heaven! I pour, with grateful tears,
  Heart-blessings on the holy dead and thee!

III.—REPOSE OF A HOLY FAMILY.

FROM AN OLD ITALIAN PICTURE.

Under a palm-tree, by the green, old Nile,
  Lull'd on his mother's breast, the fair child lies,
With dove-like breathings, and a tender smile
  Brooding above the slumber of his eyes;
While, through the stillness of the burning skies,
  Lo! the dread works of Egypt's buried kings,
Temple and pyramid, beyond him rise,
  Regal and still as everlasting things.
Vain pomps! from him, with that pure, flowery cheek,
  Soft shadow'd by his mother's drooping head,
A new-born spirit, mighty, and yet meek,
  O'er the whole world like vernal air shall spread;
And bid all earthly grandeurs cast the crown,
Before the suffering and the lowly, down.

IV.—PICTURE OF THE INFANT CHRIST WITH FLOWERS.

ALL the bright hues from eastern garlands glowing,
Round the young child luxuriantly are spread ;
Gifts, fairer far than Magian kings, bestowing
In adoration, o'er his cradle shed.
Roses, deep-filled with rich midsummer's red,
Circle his hands : but, in his grave, sweet eye,
Thought seems e'en now to wake, and prophecy
Of ruder coronals for that meek head.
And thus it was ! a diadem of thorn
Earth gave to Him who mantled her with flowers ;
To Him who pour'd forth blessings in soft showers
O'er all her paths, a cup of bitter scorn !
And *we* repine, for whom that cup He took,
O'er blooms that mock'd our hope, o'er idols that forsook !

V.—ON A REMEMBERED PICTURE OF CHRIST.

AN ECCE HOMO BY LEONARDO DA VINCI.

I MET that image on a mirthful day
Of youth ; and, sinking with a still'd surprise,
The pride of life, before those holy eyes,
In my quick heart died thoughtfully away,
Abashed to mute confession of a sway,
Awful, though meek. And now, that from the strings

Of my soul's lyre, the tempest's mighty wings
Have struck forth tones which then unwaken'd lay;
Now, that around the deep life of my mind,
Affections, deathless as itself, have twined,
Oft does the pale, bright vision still float by;
But more divinely sweet, and speaking *now*
Of One whose pity, throned on that sad brow,
Sounded all depths of love, grief, death, humanity!

VI.—THE CHILDREN WHOM JESUS BLESSED.

HAPPY were they, the mothers, in whose sight
Ye grew, fair children! hallow'd from that hour
By your Lord's blessing. Surely thence a shower
Of heavenly beauty, a transmitted light
Hung on your brows and eyelids, meekly bright,
Through all the after years, which saw ye move
Lowly, yet still majestic, in the might,
The conscious glory of the Saviour's love!
And honour'd be all childhood, for the sake
Of that high love! Let reverential care
Watch to behold the immortal spirit wake,
And shield its first bloom from unholy air;
Owning, in each young suppliant glance, the sign
Of claims upon a heritage divine.

VII.—MOUNTAIN SANCTUARIES.

"He went up to a mountain apart to pray."

A CHILD midst ancient mountains I have stood,
Where the wild falcons make their lordly nest

On high. The spirit of the solitude
Fell solemnly upon my infant breast,
Though then I pray'd not; but deep thoughts have press'd
Into my being since it breathed that air,
Nor could I *now* one moment live the guest
Of such dread scenes, without the springs of prayer
O'erflowing all my soul. No minsters rise
Like them in pure communion with the skies,
Vast, silent, open unto night and day;
So might the o'erburden'd Son of Man have felt,
When, turning where inviolate stillness dwelt,
He sought high mountains, there apart to pray,

VIII.—THE LILIES OF THE FIELD.

"Consider the lilies of the field."

FLOWERS! when the Saviour's calm, benignant eye
Fell on your gentle beauty—when from you
That heavenly lesson for all hearts he drew,
Eternal, universal, as the sky—
Then, in the bosom of your purity,
A voice He set, as in a temple-shrine,
That life's quick travellers ne'er might pass you by,
Unwarn'd of that sweet oracle divine.
And though too oft its low, celestial sound,
By the harsh notes of work-day Care is drown'd,
And the loud steps of vain unlistening Haste,
Yet, the great ocean hath no tone of power
Mightier to reach the soul, in thought's hush'd hour,
Than yours, ye Lilies! chosen thus and graced!

IX.—THE BIRDS OF THE AIR.

"And behold the birds of the air."

Ye too, the free and fearless birds of air,
Were charged that hour, on missionary wing,
The same bright lesson o'er the seas to bear,
Heaven-guided wanderers, with the winds of spring.
Sing on, before the storm and after, sing!
And call us to your echoing woods away
From worldly cares; and bid our spirits bring
Faith to imbibe deep wisdom from your lay.
So may those blessed vernal strains renew
Childhood, a childhood yet more pure and true
E'en than the first, within th' awaken'd mind;
While sweetly, joyously, they tell of life,
That knows no doubts, no questionings, no strife,
But hangs upon its God, unconsciously resign'd.

X.—THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON.

"And he that was dead sat up and began to speak."

He that was dead rose up and spoke—He spoke!
Was it of that majestic world unknown?
Those words, which first the bier's dread silence broke,
Came they with revelation in each tone?
Were the far cities of the nations gone,
The solemn halls of consciousness or sleep,
Or man uncurtain'd by that spirit lone,
Back from their portal summon'd o'er the deep?

Be hush'd, my soul! the veil of darkness lay
Still drawn: thy Lord call'd back the voice departed
To spread his truth, to comfort his weak-hearted,
Not to reveal the mysteries of its way.
Oh! take that lesson home in silent faith,
Put on submissive strength to *meet*, not *question*,
death!

XI.—THE OLIVE-TREE.

THE palm—the vine—the cedar—each hath power
To bid fair Oriental shapes glance by;
And each quick glistening of the laurel bower
Wafts Grecian images o'er fancy's eye.
But thou, pale olive!—in *thy* branches lie
Far deeper spells than prophet grove of old
Might e'er enshrine: I could not hear the sigh
To the wind's faintest whisper, nor behold
One shiver of thy leaves' dim silvery green,
Without high thoughts and solemn, of that scene
When, in the garden, the Redeemer pray'd—
When pale stars look'd upon his fainting head,
And angels, minist'ring in silent dread,
Trembled, perchance, within *thy* trembling shade.

XII.—THE DARKNESS OF THE CRUCIFIXION.

ON Judah's hills a weight of darkness hung,
Felt shudderingly at noon: the land had driven
A Guest divine back to the gates of heaven—
A life, whence all pure founts of healing sprung,

All grace, all truth. And when, to anguish wrung,
From the sharp cross th' enlightening spirit fled,
O'er the forsaken earth a pall of dread
By the great shadow of that death was flung.
O Saviour! O Atoner!—thou that fain
Wouldst make thy temple in each human heart,
Leave not such darkness in my soul to reign;
Ne'er may thy presence from its depths depart,
Chased thence by guilt! Oh! turn not *thou* away,
The bright and morning Star, my guide to perfect day!

XIII.—PLACES OF WORSHIP.

"God is a spirit."

SPIRIT! whose life-sustaining presence fills
Air, ocean, central depths by man untried,
Thou for thy worshippers hast sanctified
All place, all time! The silence of the hills
Breathes veneration,—founts and choral rills
Of thee are murmuring,—to its inmost glade
The living forest with thy whisper thrills,
And there is holiness in every shade.
Yet must the thoughtful soul of man invest
With dearer consecration those pure fanes,
Which, sever'd from all sound of earth's unrest,
Hear naught but suppliant or adoring strains
Rise heavenward. Ne'er may rock or cave possess
Their claim on human hearts to solemn tenderness.

XIV.—OLD CHURCH IN AN ENGLISH PARK.*

CROWNING a flowery slope it stood alone
In gracious sanctity. A bright rill wound,
Caressingly, about the holy ground;
And warbled, with a never-dying tone,
Amidst the tombs. A hue of ages gone
Seem'd, from that ivied porch, that solemn gleam
Of tower and cross, pale-quivering on the stream,
O'er all th' ancestral woodlands to be thrown—
And something yet more deep. The air was fraught
With noble memories, whispering many a thought
Of England's fathers: loftily serene,
They that had toil'd, watch'd, struggled to secure,
Within such fabrics, worship free and pure,
Reign'd there, the o'ershadowing spirits of the scene.

XV.—A CHURCH IN NORTH WALES.†

BLESSINGS be round it still! that gleaming fane,
Low in its mountain-glen! Old, mossy trees
Mellow the sunshine through the untinted pane;
And oft, borne in upon some fitful breeze,
The deep sound of the ever-pealing seas,
Filling the hollows with its anthem-tone,
There meets the voice of psalms! Yet not alone,
For memories lulling to the heart as these,
I bless thee, midst thy rocks, grey house of prayer!

* Fawsley Park, near Daventry.
† That of Aber, near Bangor.

But for *their* sakes who unto thee repair
From the hill-cabins and the ocean-shore.
Oh! may the fisher and the mountaineer
Words to sustain earth's toiling children hear,
Within thy lowly walls, for evermore!

XVI.—LOUISE SCHEPLER.

[Louise Schepler was the faithful servant and friend of the pastor Oberlin. The last letter addressed by him to his children for their perusal after his decease, affectingly commemorates her unwearied zeal in visiting and instructing the children of the mountain hamlets, through all seasons, and in all circumstances of difficulty and danger.]

A FEARLESS journeyer o'er the mountain-snow
Wert thou, Louise! The sun's decaying light,
Oft, with its latest, melancholy glow,
Redden'd thy steep, wild way: the starry night
Oft met thee, crossing some lone eagle's height,
Piercing some dark ravine: and many a dell
Knew, through its ancient rock-recesses well,
Thy gentle presence, which hath made them bright
Oft in mid-storms—oh! not with beauty's eye,
Nor the proud glance of genius keenly burning;
No! pilgrim of unwearying charity!
Thy spell was *love*—the mountain deserts turning
To blessed realms, where stream and rock rejoice
When the glad human soul lifts a thanksgiving voice!

XVII.—TO THE SAME.

For thou, a holy shepherdess and kind,
Through the pine forests, by the upland rills,
Didst roam to seek the children of the hills,
A wild, neglected flock! to seek, and find,
And meekly win! there feeding each young mind
With balms of heavenly eloquence: not *thine*,
Daughter of Christ! but His, whose love divine
Its own clear spirit in thy breast had shrined,
A burning light! Oh! beautiful, in truth,
Upon the mountains are the feet of those
Who bear His tidings! From thy morn of youth,
For this were all thy journeyings; and the close
Of that long path, Heaven's own bright sabbath rest,
Must wait thee, wanderer! on thy Saviour's breast.

THE WATER-LILY.

"The Water-Lilies, that are serene in the calm clear water, but no less serene among the black and scowling waves."

Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life.

Oh! beautiful thou art,
Thou sculpture-like and stately river-queen!
Crowning the depths, as with the light serene!
Of a pure heart.

Bright lily of the wave!
Rising in fearless grace with every swell,

Thou seem'st as if a spirit meekly brave
Dwelt in thy cell:
Lifting alike thy head
Of placid beauty, feminine yet free,
Whether with foam or pictured azure spread
The waters be.

What is like thee, fair flower,
The gentle and the firm! thus bearing up
To the blue sky that alabaster cup,
As to the shower?

Oh! love is most like thee,
The love of woman! quivering to the blast
Through every nerve, yet rooted deep and fast,
Midst life's dark sea.

And faith—Oh, is not faith
Like thee, too, lily! springing into light,
Still buoyantly, above the billows' might,
Through the storm's breath?

Yes! link'd with such high thought,
Flower! let thine image in my bosom lie;
Till something there of its own purity
And peace be wrought—

Something yet more divine
Than the clear, pearly, virgin lustre shed
Forth from thy breast upon the river's bed
As from a shrine.

RECORDS OF THE SPRING OF 1834.

[These Sonnets, written in the months of April, May, and June, were intended, together with the "Records of the Autumn of 1834," to form a continuation of the series entitled "Sonnets, Devotional and Memorial."]

I.—A VERNAL THOUGHT.

O FESTAL Spring! midst thy victorious glow,
Far-spreading o'er the kindled woods and plains,
And streams, that bound to meet thee from their chains,
Well might there lurk the shadow of a woe
For human hearts, and in the exulting flow
Of thy rich songs a melancholy tone,
Were we of mould all earthly—*we* alone,
Sever'd from thy great spell, and doom'd to go
Farther, still farther, from our sunny time,
Never to feel the breathings of our prime,
Never to flower again! But we, O Spring!
Cheer'd by deep spirit-whispers not of earth,
Press to the regions of thy heavenly birth,
As here thy flowers and birds press on to bloom and sing.

II.—TO THE SKY.

FAR from the rustlings of the poplar bough,
Which o'er my opening life wild music made,
Far from the green hills with their heathery glow
And flashing streams whereby my childhood play'd;
In the dim city, midst the sounding flow
Of restless life, to thee in love I turn,
O thou rich sky! and from thy splendours learn
How song-birds come and part, flowers wane and blow.
With thee all shapes of glory find their home,
And thou hast taught me well, majestic dome!
By stars, by sunsets, by soft clouds which rove
Thy blue expanse, or sleep in silvery rest,
That Nature's God hath left *no* spot unbless'd
With founts of beauty for the eye of love.

III.—ON RECORDS OF IMMATURE GENIUS.*

OH! judge in thoughtful tenderness of those
Who, richly dower'd for life, are called to die
Ere the soul's flame, through storms, hath won repose
In truth's divinest ether, still and high!
Let their mind's riches claim a trustful sigh!
Deem them but sad, sweet fragments of a strain,
First notes of some yet struggling harmony,

* Written after reading Memorials of the late Mrs Tighe.

By the strong rush, the crowding joy and pain
Of many inspirations met, and held
From its true sphere,—oh! soon it might have swell'd
Majestically forth! Nor doubt that He,
Whose touch mysterious may on earth dissolve
Those links of music, elsewhere will evolve
Their grand consummate hymn, from passion-gusts made free!

IV.—ON WATCHING THE FLIGHT OF A SKY-LARK.

Upward and upward still!—in pearly light
The clouds are steep'd! the vernal spirit sighs
With bliss in every wind, and crystal skies
Woo thee, O bird! to thy celestial height.
Bird, piercing heaven with music! thy free flight
Hath meaning for all bosoms; most of all
For those wherein the rapture and the might
Of poesy lie deep, and strive, and burn,
For their high place. O heirs of genius! learn
From the sky's bird your way! No joy may fill
Your hearts, no gift of holy strength be won
To bless *your* songs, ye children of the sun!
Save by the unswerving flight—upward and upward still!

V.—A THOUGHT OF THE SEA.

My earliest memories to thy shores are bound,
Thy solemn shores, thou ever-chanting main!
The first rich sunsets, kindling thought profound
In my lone being, made thy restless plain
As the vast, shining floor of some dread fane,
All paved with glass and fire. Yet, O blue deep!
Thou that no trace of human hearts dost keep,
Never to thee did love with silvery chain
Draw my soul's dream, which through all nature sought
What waves deny,—some bower of *steadfast* bliss,
A *home* to twine with fancy, feeling, thought,
As with sweet flowers. But chasten'd hope for this
Now turns from earth's green valleys, as from thee,
To that sole changeless world, where "there is no more sea."

VI.—DISTANT SOUND OF THE SEA AT EVENING.

Yet, rolling far up some green mountain-dale,
Oft let me hear, as ofttimes I have heard,
Thy swell, thou deep! when evening calls the bird
And bee to rest; when summer-tints grow pale,
Seen through the gathering of a dewy veil;
And peasant steps are hastening to repose,
And gleaming flocks lie down, and flower-cups close

To the last whisper of the falling gale.
Then, midst the dying of all other sound,
When the soul hears thy distant voice profound,
Lone-worshipping, and knows that through the night
'Twill worship still, then most its anthem-tone
Speaks to our being of the Eternal One,
Who girds tired nature with unslumbering might.

VII.—THE RIVER CLWYD IN NORTH WALES.*

O CAMBRIAN river! with slow music gliding
By pastoral hills, old woods, and ruin'd towers;
Now midst thy reeds and golden willows hiding,
Now gleaming forth by some rich bank of flowers;
Long flow'd the current of my life's clear hours
Onward with thine, whose voice yet haunts my dream,
Though time and change, and other mightier powers,
Far from thy side have borne me. Thou, smooth stream!
Art winding still thy sunny meads along,
Murmuring to cottage and grey hall thy song,
Low, sweet, unchanged. *My* being's tide hath pass'd
Through rocks and storms; yet will I not complain,
If, thus wrought free and pure from earthly stain,
Brightly its waves may reach their parent-deep at last.

* See Vignette in Vol. VI.

VIII.—ORCHARD BLOSSOMS.

Doth thy heart stir within thee at the sight
Of orchard blooms upon the mossy bough?
Doth their sweet household-smile waft back the glow
Of childhood's morn?—the wondering, fresh delight
In earth's new colouring, then all strangely bright,
A joy of fairyland? Doth some old nook,
Haunted by visions of thy first-loved book,
Rise on thy soul, with faint-streak'd blossoms white
Shower'd o'er the turf, and the lone primrose knot,
And robin's nest, still faithful to the spot,
And the bee's dreamy chime? O gentle friend!
The world's cold breath, not *Time's*, this life bereaves
Of vernal gifts: time hallows what he leaves,
And will for us endear spring-memories to the end.

May 8th.

IX.—TO A DISTANT SCENE.

Still are the cowslips from thy bosom springing,
O far-off, grassy dell!—and dost thou see,
When southern winds first wake their vernal singing,
The star-gleam of the wood anemone?
Doth the shy ringdove haunt thee yet? the bee
Hang on thy flowers as when I breathed farewell
To their wild blooms? and, round my beechen tree,
Still, in green softness, doth the moss-bank swell?
Oh, strange illusion! by the fond heart wrought,

Whose own warm life suffuses nature's face!
My being's tide of many-coloured thought
Hath pass'd from thee; and now, rich, leafy place!
I paint thee oft, scarce consciously, a scene,
Silent, forsaken, dim, shadow'd by what hath been.

X.—A REMEMBRANCE OF GRASMERE.

O VALE and lake, within your mountain-urn
Smiling so tranquilly, and set so deep!
Oft doth your dreamy loveliness return,
Colouring the tender shadows of my sleep
With light Elysian; for the hues that steep
Your shores in melting lustre, seem to float
On golden clouds from spirit-lands remote,
Isles of the blest; and in our memory keep
Their place with holiest harmonies. Fair scene,
Most loved by evening and her dewy star!
Oh! ne'er may man, with touch unhallow'd, jar
The perfect music of thy charm serene!
Still, still unchanged, may *one* sweet region wear
Smiles that subdue the soul to love, and tears, and
prayer.

XI.—THOUGHTS CONNECTED WITH TREES.

TREES, gracious trees!—how rich a gift ye are,
Crown of the earth! to human hearts and eyes!
How doth the thought of home, in lands afar,
Link'd with your forms and kindly whisperings rise!

How the whole picture of a childhood lies
Oft midst your boughs forgotten, buried deep!
Till, gazing through them up the summer skies,
As hush'd we stand, a breeze perchance may creep,
And old, sweet leaf-sounds reach the inner world
Where memory coils—and lo! at once unfurl'd,
The past, a glowing scroll, before our sight,
Spreads clear; while, gushing from their long-seal'd urn
Young thoughts, pure dreams, undoubting prayers return,
And a lost mother's eye gives back its holy light.

XII.—THE SAME.

And ye are strong to shelter!—all meek things,
All that need home and covert, love your shade!
Birds of shy song, and low-voiced quiet springs,
And nun-like violets, by the winds betray'd.
Childhood beneath your fresh green tents hath play'd
With his first primrose-wreath: there love hath sought
A veiling gloom for his unutter'd thought;
And silent grief, of day's keen glare afraid,
A refuge for her tears; and ofttimes there
Hath lone devotion found a place of prayer,
A native temple, solemn, hush'd, and dim;
For wheresoe'er your murmuring tremors thrill
The woody twilight, there man's heart hath still
Confess'd a spirit's breath, and heard a ceaseless hymn.

XIII.—ON READING PAUL AND VIRGINIA IN CHILDHOOD.

O GENTLE story of the Indian isle!
I loved thee in my lonely childhood well
On the sea-shore, when day's last, purple smile
Slept on the waters, and their hollow swell
And dying cadence lent a deeper spell
Unto thine ocean-pictures. Midst thy palms
And strange bright birds, my fancy joy'd to dwell,
And watch the southern cross through midnight calms,
And track the spicy woods. Yet more I bless'd
Thy vision of sweet love—kind, trustful, true,
Lighting the citron groves, a heavenly guest,
With such pure smiles as Paradise once knew.
Even then my young heart wept o'er this world's power,
To reach with blight that holiest Eden flower.

XIV.—A THOUGHT AT SUNSET.

STILL that last look is solemn! though thy rays,
O sun! to-morrow will give back, we know,
The joy to nature's heart. Yet through the glow
Of clouds that mantle thy decline, our gaze
Tracks thee with love half fearful: and in days
When earth too much adored thee, what a swell
Of mournful passion, deepening mighty lays,
Told how the dying bade thy light farewell,

O sun of Greece ! O glorious, festal sun !
Lost, lost !—for them thy golden hours were done,
And darkness lay before them ! Happier far
Are we, not thus to thy bright wheels enchain'd,
Not thus for thy last parting unsustain'd—
Heirs of a purer day, with its unsetting star.

XV.—IMAGES OF PATRIARCHAL LIFE.

Calm scenes of patriarch life ! how long a power
Your unworn pastoral images retain
O'er the true heart, which in its childhood's hour
Drank their pure freshness deep ! The camels' train
Winding in patience o'er the desert plain—
The tent, the palm-tree, the reposing flock,
The gleaming fount, the shadow of the rock—
Oh ! by how subtle, yet how strong a chain,
And in the influence of its touch how bless'd,
Are these things link'd, in many a thoughtful breast,
To household memories, through all change endear'd !
—The matin bird, the ripple of a stream
Beside our native porch, the hearth-light's gleam,
The voices, earliest by the soul revered !

XVI.—ATTRACTION OF THE EAST.

What secret current of man's nature turns
Unto the golden East with ceaseless flow ?
Still, where the sunbeam at its fountain burns,
The pilgrim spirit would adore and glow;

Rapt in high thoughts, though weary, faint, and slow,
Still doth the traveller through the deserts wind,
Led by those old Chaldean stars, which know
Where pass'd the shepherd-fathers of mankind.
Is it some quenchless instinct, which from far
Still points to where our alienated home
Lay in bright peace? O thou true Eastern star!
Saviour! atoning Lord! where'er we roam,
Draw still our hearts to thee; else, else how vain
Their hope, the fair lost birthright to regain!

XVII.—TO AN AGED FRIEND.*

Not long thy voice amongst us may be heard,
Servant of God!—thy day is almost done;
The charm now lingering in thy look and word
Is that which hangs about thy setting sun—
That which the meekness of decay hath won
Still from revering love. Yet doth the sense
Of life immortal—progress but begun—
Pervade thy mien with such clear eloquence,
That hope, not sadness, breathes from thy decline;
And the loved flowers which round thee smile farewell,
Of more than vernal glory seem to tell,
By thy pure spirit touch'd with light divine;
While we, to whom its parting gleams are given,
Forget the grave in trustful thoughts of heaven.

* The late Dr Percival of Dublin.

XVIII.—FOLIAGE.

COME forth, and let us through our hearts receive
The joy of verdure! See! the honey'd lime
Showers cool green light o'er banks where wild-flowers weave
Thick tapestry, and woodbine-tendrils climb
Up the brown oak from buds of moss and thyme.
The rich, deep masses of the sycamore
Hang heavy with the fulness of their prime;
And the white poplar, from its foliage hoar,
Scatters forth gleams like moonlight, with each gale
That sweeps the boughs: the chestnut-flowers are past,
The crowning glories of the hawthorn fail,
But arches of sweet eglantine are cast
From every hedge. Oh! never may we lose,
Dear friend! our fresh delight in simplest nature's hues!

June 2d.

XIX.—A PRAYER.

FATHER in Heaven! from whom the simplest flower,
On the high Alps or fiery desert thrown,
Draws not sweet odour or young life alone,
But the deep virtue of an inborn power
'o cheer the wanderer in his fainting hour
Vith thoughts of Thee;—to strengthen, to infuse
'aith, love, and courage, by the tender hues

That speak thy presence! oh, with such a dower
Grace thou my song!—the precious gift bestow
From thy pure Spirit's treasury divine,
To wake one tear of purifying flow,
To soften one wrung heart for Thee and thine;
So shall the life breathed through the lowly strain
Be as the meek wild-flower's—if transient, yet not vain.

XX.—PRAYER CONTINUED.

"What in me is dark
Illumine; what is low, raise and support."
MILTON.

FAR are the wings of intellect astray
That strive not, Father! to thy heavenly seat;
They rove, but mount not, and the tempests beat
Still on their plumes. O Source of mental day!
Chase from before my spirit's track the array
Of mists and shadows, raised by earthly care,
In troubled hosts that cross the purer air,
And veil the opening of the starry way,
Which brightens on to thee! Oh, guide thou right
My thought's weak pinion; clear mine inward sight,
The eternal springs of beauty to discern,
Welling beside thy throne; unseal mine ear,
Nature's true oracles in joy to hear:
Keep my soul wakeful still to li[illegible]arn.

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XXI.—MEMORIAL OF A CONVERSATION.

YES! all things tell us of a birthright lost—
A brightness from our nature pass'd away!
Wanderers we seem that from an alien coast
Would turn to where their Father's mansion lay;
And but by some lone flower, that midst decay
Smiles mournfully, or by some sculptured stone,
Revealing dimly, with grey moss o'ergrown,
The faint, worn impress of its glory's day,
Can trace their once-free heritage, though dreams,
Fraught with its picture, oft in startling gleams
Flash o'er their souls. But One, oh! *One* alone,
For us the ruin'd fabric may rebuild,
And bid the wilderness again be fill'd
With Eden-flowers—One mighty to atone!

*June 27th.**

* For this corrected chronology of these sonnets, we are indebted to the Rev. R. P. Graves, Bowness.

RECORDS OF THE AUTUMN OF 1834.

I.—THE RETURN TO POETRY.

ONCE more the eternal melodies from far
Woo me like songs of home: once more discerning,
Through fitful clouds, the pure majestic star
Above the poet's world serenely burning,
Thither my soul, fresh-wing'd by love, is turning,
As o'er the waves the wood-bird seeks her nest,
For those green heights of dewy stillness yearning,
Whence glorious minds o'erlook this earth's unrest.
Now be the spirit of heaven's truth my guide
Through the bright land!—that no brief gladness, found
In passing bloom, rich odour, or sweet sound,
May lure my footsteps from their aim aside:
Their true, high quest—to seek, if ne'er to gain,
The inmost, purest shrine of that august domain.

September 9th.

II.—TO SILVIO PELLICO, ON READING HIS "PRIGIONE."

THERE are who climb the mountain's heathery side,
Or, in life's vernal strength triumphant, urge
The bark's fleet rushing through the crested surge,
Or spur the courser's fiery race of pride
Over the green savannahs, gleaming wide
By some vast lake; yet thus, on foaming sea,
Or chainless wild, reign far less nobly free
Than *thou*, in that lone dungeon, glorified
By thy brave suffering. Thou from its dark cell
Fierce thought and baleful passion didst exclude,
Filling the dedicated solitude
With God; and where *His* Spirit deigns to dwell,
Though the worn frame in fetters withering lie,
There throned in *peace* divine is liberty!

III.—TO THE SAME, RELEASED.

How flows thy being now?—like some glad hymn,
One strain of solemn rapture?—doth thine eye
Wander through tears of voiceless feeling dim,
O'er the crown'd Alps, that, midst the upper sky,
Sleep in the sunlight of thine Italy?
Or is thy gaze of reverent love profound,
Unto these dear, parental faces bound,
Which, with their silvery hair, so oft glanced by,
Haunting thy prison-dreams? Where'er thou art,
Blessings be shed upon thine inmost heart!

Joy, from kind looks, blue skies, and flowery sod,
For that pure voice of thoughtful wisdom sent
Forth from thy cell, in sweetness eloquent,
Of love to man, and quenchless trust in God!

IV.—ON A SCENE IN THE DARGLE.*

'Twas a bright moment of my life when first,
O thou pure stream through rocky portals flowing!
That temple-chamber of thy glory burst
On my glad sight! Thy pebbly couch lay glowing
With deep mosaic hues; and, richly throwing
O'er thy cliff-walls a tinge of autumn's vest,
High bloom'd the heath-flowers, and the wild wood's crest
Was touch'd with gold. Flow ever thus, bestowing
Gifts of delight, sweet stream! on all who move
Gently along thy shores; and oh! if love—
True love, in secret nursed, with sorrow fraught—
Should sometimes bear his treasured griefs to thee,
Then full of kindness let thy music be,
Singing repose to every troubled thought!

* A beautiful valley in the county of Wicklow.

V.—ON READING COLERIDGE'S EPITAPH,

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

"Stop, Christian passer-by! stop, child of God!
And read with gentle breast:—Beneath this sod
A Poet lies, or that which once seem'd he:
Oh! lift one thought in prayer for S. T. C.!
That He, who once in vain, with toil of breath,
Found death in life, may here find life in death!
Mercy, for praise—to be forgiven, for fame—
He ask'd and hoped through Christ. Do thou the same."

SPIRIT! so oft in radiant freedom soaring
High through seraphic mysteries unconfined,
And oft, a diver through the deep of mind,
Its caverns, far below its waves, exploring;
And oft such strains of breezy music pouring,
As, with the floating sweetness of their sighs,
Could still all fevers of the heart, restoring
Awhile that freshness left in Paradise;
Say, of those glorious wanderings what the goal?
What the rich fruitage to man's kindred soul
From wealth of thine bequeathed? O strong and high,
And sceptred intellect! thy goal confess'd
Was the Redeemer's Cross—thy last bequest
One lesson breathing thence profound humility!

VI.—ON THE DATURA ARBOREA.

MAJESTIC plant! such fairy dreams as lie,
Nursed, where the bee sucks in the cowslip's bell,
Are not *thy* train. Those flowers of vase-like swell,
Clear, large, with dewy moonlight fill'd from high,
And in their monumental purity
Serenely drooping, round thee seem to draw
Visions link'd strangely with that silent awe
Which broods o'er sculpture's works. A meet ally
For those heroic forms, the simply grand
Art thou: and worthy, carved by plastic hand,
Above some kingly poet's tomb to shine
In spotless marble; honouring one whose strain
Soar'd, upon wings of thought that knew no stain,
Free through the starry heavens of truth divine.

VII.—DESIGN AND PERFORMANCE.

THEY float before my soul, the fair designs
Which I would body forth to life and power,
Like clouds, that with their wavering hues and lines
Portray majestic buildings:—dome and tower,
Bright spire, that through the rainbow and the shower
Points to th' unchanging stars; and high arcade,
Far-sweeping to some glorious altar, made
For holiest rites. Meanwhile the waning hour
Melts from me, and by fervent dreams o'erwrought,
I sink. O friend! O link'd with each high thought!

Aid me, of those rich visions to detain
All I may grasp; until thou see'st fulfill'd,
While time and strength allow, my hope to build
For lowly hearts devout, but *one* enduring fane!

October 18*th*.

VIII.—HOPE OF FUTURE COMMUNION WITH NATURE.

If e'er again my spirit be allow'd
Converse with nature in her chambers deep,
Where lone, and mantled with the rolling cloud,
She broods o'er new-born waters, as they leap
In sword-like flashes down the heathery steep
From caves of mystery;—if I roam once more
Where dark pines quiver to the torrent's roar,
And voiceful oaks respond;—may I not reap
A more ennobling joy, a loftier power,
Than e'er was shed on life's more vernal hour
From such communion? Yes! I then shall know,
That not in vain have sorrow, love, and thought
Their long, still work of preparation wrought,
For that more perfect sense of God reveal'd below.

IX.—DREAMS OF THE DEAD.

Oft in still night-dreams a departed face
Bends o'er me with sweet earnestness of eye,
Wearing no more of earthly pains a trace,
But all the tender pity that may lie

On the clear brow of Immortality,
Calm, yet profound. Soft rays illume that mien;
Th' unshadow'd moonlight of some far-off sky
Around it floats transparently serene
As a pure veil of waters. O rich Sleep!
The spells are mighty in thy regions deep,
To glorify with reconciling breath,
Effacing, brightening, giving forth to shine
Beauty's high truth; and how much more divine
Thy power when link'd, in this, with thy strong
brother—Death!

X.—THE POETRY OF THE PSALMS.

Nobly thy song, O minstrel! rush'd to meet
Th' Eternal on the pathway of the blast,
With darkness round him, as a mantle cast,
And cherubim to waft his flying seat.
Amidst the hills that smoked beneath his feet,
With trumpet-voice thy spirit call'd aloud,
And bade the trembling rocks his name repeat,
And the bent cedars, and the bursting cloud.
But far more gloriously to earth made known
By that high strain, than by the thunder's tone,
The flashing torrents, or the ocean's roll,
Jehovah spake, through the imbreathing fire,
Nature's vast realms for ever to inspire
With the deep worship of a living soul.

DESPONDENCY AND ASPIRATION.*

" Par correr miglior acqua alza le vele,
Omai la navicella del mio Intelleto."
DANTE.

My soul was mantled with dark shadows, born
Of lonely Fear, disquieted in vain;
Its phantoms hung around the star of morn,
A cloud-like, weeping train:
Through the long day they dimm'd the autumn gold
On all the glistening leaves, and wildly roll'd,
When the last farewell flush of light was glowing
Across the sunset sky;
O'er its rich isles of vaporous glory throwing
One melancholy dye.

And when the solemn night
Came rushing with her might
Of stormy oracles from caves unknown,
Then with each fitful blast
Prophetic murmurs pass'd,
Wakening or answering some deep Sybil-tone
Far buried in my breast, yet prompt to rise
With every gusty wail that o'er the wind-harp flies.

* Partly composed during the Author's last illness.

" Fold, fold thy wings," they cried, " and strive no
more—
Faint spirit ! strive no more : for thee too strong
Are outward ill and wrong,
And inward wasting fires ! Thou canst not soar
Free on a starry way
Beyond their blighting sway,
At Heaven's high gate serenely to adore !
How shouldst *thou* hope earth's fetters to unbind ?
O passionate, yet weak ! O trembler to the wind !

" Never shall aught but broken music flow
From joy of thine, deep love, or tearful woe—
Such homeless notes as through the forest sigh,
From the reeds' hollow shaken,
When sudden breezes waken
Their vague, wild symphony.
No power is theirs, and no abiding-place
In human hearts ; their sweetness leaves no trace—
Born only so to die !

" Never shall aught but perfume, faint and vain,
On the fleet pinion of the changeful hour,
From thy bruised life again
A moment's essence breathe ;
Thy life, whose trampled flower
Into the blessed wreath
Of household charities no longer bound,
Lies pale and withering on the barren ground.

" So fade, fade on ! Thy gift of love shall cling,
A coiling sadness, round thy heart and brain—

A silent, fruitless, yet undying thing,
All sensitive to pain!
And still the shadow of vain dreams shall fall
O'er thy mind's world, a daily darkening pall.
Fold, then, thy wounded wing, and sink subdued
In cold and unrepining quietude!"

Then my soul yielded: spells of numbing breath
Crept o'er it heavy with a dew of death—
Its powers, like leaves before the night-rain, closing;
And, as by conflict of wild sea-waves toss'd
On the chill bosom of some desert coast,
Mutely and hopelessly I lay reposing.

When silently it seem'd
As if a soft mist gleam'd
Before my passive sight, and, slowly curling,
To many a shape and hue
Of vision'd beauty grew,
Like a wrought banner, fold by fold unfurling.
Oh! the rich scenes that o'er mine inward eye
Unrolling then swept by
With dreamy motion! Silvery seas were there
Lit by large dazzling stars, and arch'd by skies
Of southern midnight's most transparent dyes;
And gemm'd with many an island, wildly fair,
Which floated past me into orient day,
Still gathering lustre on th' illumin'd way,
Till its high groves of wondrous flowering-trees
Colour'd the silvery seas.

believe is felt

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many hearts.
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One grand Creation-Hymn,
Whose notes the seraphim
Lift to the glorious height of music wing'd and crown'd.

Shall not those notes find echoes in my lyre,
Faithful though faint? Shall not my spirit's fire,
If slowly, yet unswervingly, ascend
Now to its fount and end?
Shall not my earthly love, all purified,
Shine forth a heavenward guide,
An angel of bright power—and strongly bear
My being upward into holier air,
Where fiery passion-clouds have no abode,
And the sky's temple-arch o'erflows with God?

The radiant hope new-born
Expands like rising morn
In my life's life: and as a ripening rose
The crimson shadow of its glory throws
More vivid, hour by hour, on some pure stream,
So from that hope are spreading
Rich hues, o'er nature shedding
Each day a clearer, spiritual gleam.

Let not those rays fade from me!—once enjoy'd,
Father of spirits! let them not depart—
Leaving the chill'd earth, without form and void,
Darken'd by mine own heart!
Lift, aid, sustain me! Thou, by whom alone
All lovely gifts and pure
In the soul's grasp endure;

Thou, to the steps of whose eternal throne
All knowledge flows—a sea for evermore
Breaking its crested waves on that sole shore—
Oh, consecrate my life! that I may sing
Of Thee with joy that hath a living spring,
In a full heart of music! Let my lays
Through the resounding mountains waft thy praise,
And with that theme the wood's green cloisters fill,
And make their quivering, leafy dimness thrill
To the rich breeze of song! Oh! let me wake
The deep religion, which hath dwelt from yore
Silently brooding by lone cliff and lake,
And wildest river-shore!
And let me summon all the voices dwelling
Where eagles build, and cavern'd rills are welling,
And where the cataract's organ-peal is swelling,
In that one spirit gather'd to adore!

Forgive, O Father! if presumptuous thought
Too daringly in aspiration rise!
Let not thy child all vainly have been taught
By weakness, and by wanderings, and by sighs
Of sad confession! Lowly be my heart,
And on its penitential altar spread
The offerings worthless, till Thy grace impart
The fire from heaven, whose touch alone can shed
Life, radiance, virtue!—let that vital spark
Pierce my whole being, wilder'd else and dark!

Thine are all holy things—oh, make *me* Thine,
So shall I, too, be pure—a living shrine

Unto that Spirit which goes forth from Thee,
Strong and divinely free,
Bearing thy gifts of wisdom on its flight,
And brooding o'er them with a dove-like wing,
Till thought, word, song, to Thee in worship spring,
Immortally endow'd for liberty and light.

THOUGHTS DURING SICKNESS.

I.—INTELLECTUAL POWERS.

O THOUGHT! O Memory! gems for ever heaping
High in the illumined chambers of the mind—
And thou, divine Imagination! keeping
Thy lamp's lone star mid shadowy hosts enshrined;
How in one moment rent and disentwined,
At Fever's fiery touch, apart they fall,
Your glorious combinations! broken all,
As the sand-pillars by the desert's wind
Scatter'd to whirling dust! Oh, soon uncrown'd!
Well may your parting swift, your strange return,
Subdue the soul to lowliness profound,
Guiding its chasten'd vision to discern
How by meek Faith heaven's portals must be pass'd,
Ere it can hold your gifts inalienably fast.

II.—SICKNESS LIKE NIGHT.

THOU art like Night, O Sickness! deeply stilling
Within my heart the world's disturbing sound,
And the dim quiet of my chamber filling
With low, sweet voices by Life's tumult drown'd.

Thou art like awful Night! thou gather'st round
The things that are unseen—though close they lie;
And with a truth, clear, startling, and profound,
Giv'st their dread presence to our mental eye.
Thou art like starry, spiritual Night!
High and immortal thoughts attend thy way,
And revelations, which the common light
Brings not, though wakening with its rosy ray
All outward life:—Be welcome, then, thy rod,
Before whose touch my soul unfolds itself to God.

III.—ON RETZSCH'S DESIGN OF THE ANGEL OF DEATH.*

WELL might thine awful image thus arise
With that high calm upon thy regal brow,
And the deep, solemn sweetness in those eyes,
Unto the glorious artist! Who but thou

* This sonnet was suggested by the following passage out of Mrs JAMESON'S *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, in a description she gives of a visit paid to the artist Retzsch, near Dresden:—"Afterwards he placed upon his easel a wondrous face, which made me shrink back—not with terror, for it was perfectly beautiful—but with awe, for it was unspeakably fearful: the hair streamed back from the pale brow—the orbs of sight appeared at first two dark, hollow, unfathomable spaces, like those in a skull; but when I drew nearer and looked attentively, two lovely living eyes looked at me again out of the depth of the shadow, as if from the bottom of an abyss. The mouth was divinely sweet, but sad, and the softest repose rested on every feature. This, he told me, was the ANGEL OF DEATH."

The fleeting forms of beauty can endow
For Him with permanence? who make those gleams
Of brighter life, that colour his lone dreams,
Immortal things? Let others *trembling* bow,
Angel of Death! before thee;—not to those
Whose spirits with Eternal Truth repose
Art thou a fearful shape! And oh! for *me*,
How full of welcome would thine aspect shine,
Did not the cords of strong affection twine
So fast around my *soul*, it *cannot* spring to thee!

IV.—REMEMBRANCE OF NATURE.

O NATURE! thou didst rear me for thine own,
With thy free singing-birds and mountain-brooks;
Feeding my thoughts in primrose-haunted nooks,
With fairy fantasies and wood-dreams lone;
And thou didst teach me every wandering tone
Drawn from thy many-whispering trees and waves,
And guide my steps to founts and sparry caves,
And where bright mosses wove thee a rich throne
Midst the green hills: and now that, far estranged
From all sweet sounds and odours of thy breath,
Fading I lie, within my heart unchanged,
So glows the love of thee, that not for Death
Seems that pure passion's fervour—but ordain'd
To meet on brighter shores thy majesty unstain'd.

V.—FLIGHT OF THE SPIRIT.

WHITHER, oh! whither wilt thou wing thy way?
What solemn region first upon thy sight
Shall break, unveil'd for terror or delight?
What hosts, magnificent in dread array,
My spirit! when thy prison-house of clay,
After long strife is rent? Fond, fruitless quest!
The unfledged bird, within his narrow nest,
Sees but a few green branches o'er him play,
And through their parting leaves, by fits reveal'd,
A glimpse of summer sky; nor knows the field
Wherein his dormant powers must yet be tried.
Thou art that bird!—of what beyond thee lies
Far in the untrack'd, immeasurable skies,
Knowing but this—that thou shalt find thy Guide!

VI.—FLOWERS.

WELCOME, O pure and lovely forms! again
Unto the shadowy stillness of my room!
For not alone ye bring a joyous train
Of summer-thoughts attendant on your bloom—
Visions of freshness, of rich bowery gloom,
Of the low murmurs filling mossy dells,
Of stars that look down on your folded bells
Through dewy leaves, of many a wild perfume
Greeting the wanderer of the hill and grove
Like sudden music: more than this ye bring—

Far more ; ye whisper of the all-fostering love
Which thus hath clothed you, and whose dove-like
wing
Broods o'er the sufferer drawing fever'd breath,
Whether the couch be that of life or death.

VII.—RECOVERY.*

Back, then, once more to breast the waves of life,
To battle on against the unceasing spray,
To sink o'erwearied in the stormy strife,
And rise to strive again ; yet on my way,
Oh ! linger still, thou light of better day !
Born in the hours of loneliness : and you,
Ye childlike thoughts ! the holy and the true—
Ye that came bearing, while subdued I lay,
The faith, the insight of life's vernal morn
Back on my soul, a clear, bright sense, new-born,
Now leave me not ! but as, profoundly pure,
A blue stream rushes through a darker lake
Unchang'd, e'en thus with me your journey take,
Wafting sweet airs of heaven through this low world
obscure.

* Written under the false impression occasioned by a temporary improvement in strength.

SABBATH SONNET.

COMPOSED BY MRS HEMANS A FEW DAYS BEFORE HER DEATH, AND DICTATED TO HER BROTHER.

How many blessed groups this hour are bending,
Through England's primrose meadow-paths, their way
Towards spire and tower, midst shadowy elms ascending,
Whence the sweet chimes proclaim the hallow'd day!
The halls from old heroic ages grey
Pour their fair children forth; and hamlets low,
With whose thick orchard-blooms the soft winds play,
Send out their inmates in a happy flow,
Like a freed vernal stream. I may not tread
With them those pathways—to the feverish bed
Of sickness bound; yet, O my God! I bless
Thy mercy, that with Sabbath peace hath fill'd
My chasten'd heart, and all its throbbings still'd
To one deep calm of lowliest thankfulness!

April 26th, 1835.

CRITICAL ANNOTATIONS.

"We cannot allow these verses to adorn, with a sad beauty, the pages of this Magazine—more especially as they are the last composed by their distinguished writer, and that only a few days before her death—without at least a passing tribute of regret for an event which has cast a shadow of gloom through the sunshiny fields of contemporary literature. But two months ago, the beautiful lyric entitled 'Despondency and Aspiration,' appeared in these pages, and now the sweet fountain of music from which that prophetic strain gushed, has ceased to flow. The highly gifted and accomplished, the patient, the meek, and long-suffering Felicia Hemans, is no more. She died on the night of Saturday, the 16th of May 1835, at Dublin, and met her fate with all the calm resignation of a Christian, conscious that her spirit was winging its flight to another and a better world, where 'the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

"Without disparagement of the living, we scarcely hesitate to say, that in Mrs Hemans our female literature has lost perhaps its brightest ornament. To Joanna Baillie she might be inferior, not only in vigour of conception, but in the power of metaphysically analysing those sentiments and feelings which constitute the basis of human actions,—to Mrs Jameson in the critical perception which, from detached fragments of spoken thought, can discriminate the links which bind all into a distinctive character,—to Miss Landon in eloquent facility,—to Caroline Bowles in simple pathos,—and to Mary Mitford in power of thought; but as a female writer, influencing the female mind, she has

undoubtedly stood, for some bypast years, the very first in the first rank; and this pre-eminence has been acknowledged, not only in her own land, but wherever the English tongue is spoken, whether on the banks of the eastern Ganges or the western Mississippi. Her path was her own: and shoals of imitators have arisen, alike at home and on the other side of the Atlantic, who, destitute of her animating genius, have mimicked her themes, and parodied her sentiments and language, without being able to reach its height. In her poetry, religious truth and intellectual beauty meet together; and assuredly it is not the less calculated to refine the taste and exalt the imagination, because it addresses itself almost exclusively to the better feelings of our nature alone. Over all her pictures of humanity are spread the glory and the grace reflected from purity of morals, delicacy of perception and conception, sublimity of religious faith, and warmth of patriotism; and, turning from the dark and degraded, whether in subject or sentiment, she seeks out those verdant oases in the desert of human life on which the affections may most pleasantly rest. Her poetry is intensely and entirely feminine—and, in our estimation, this is the highest praise which could be awarded it,—it could have been written by a woman only; for although, in the 'Records' of her sex, we have the female character delineated in all the varied phases of baffled passion and of ill-requited affection; of heroical self-denial, and of withering hope deferred; of devotedness tried in the furnace of affliction, and of

> 'Gentle feelings long subdued,
> Subdued and cherish'd long;'

yet its energy resembles that of the dove, 'pecking the hand that hovers o'er its mate,' and its exaltation of thought is not of the daring kind which doubts and derides, or even questions, but which clings to the anchor of hope, and looks forward with faith and reverential fear.

"Mrs Hemans has written much, and, as with all authors in like predicament, her strains are of various degrees of excellence. Independently of this, her different works will be differently estimated, as to their relative value, by dif-

ferent minds; but among the lyrics of the English language which can scarcely die, we hesitate not to assign places to 'The Hebrew Mother'—'The Treasures of the Deep'—'The Spirit's Return'—'The Homes of England'—'The Better Land'—'The Hour of Death'—'The Trumpet'—and 'The Graves of a Household.' In these 'gems of purest ray serene,' the peculiar genius of Mrs Hemans breathes, and burns, and shines pre-eminent; for her forte lay in depicting whatever tends to beautify and embellish domestic life—the gentle overflowings of love and friendship—'home-bred delights and heartfelt happiness'—the associations of local attachment—and the influences of religious feelings over the soul, whether arising from the varied circumstances and situations of man, or from the aspects of external nature. We would only here add, by way of remark, that the writings of Mrs Hemans seem to divide themselves into two pretty distinct portions—the first comprehending her 'Modern Greece,' 'Wallace,' 'Dartmoor,' 'Sceptic,' 'Historic Scenes,' and other productions, up to the publication of 'The Forest Sanctuary;' and the latter comprehending that volume, 'The Records of Woman,' 'The Scenes and Hymns of Life,' and all her subsequent productions. In her earlier works she follows the classic model, as contradistinguished from the romantic, and they are inferior in that polish of style and almost gorgeous richness of language, in which her maturer compositions are set. It is evident that new stores of thought were latterly opened up to her, in a more extended acquaintance with the literature of Spain and Germany, as well as by a profounder study of the writings of our great poetical regenerator—Wordsworth."—DELTA, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, July 1835.

"DID we not know this world to be but a place of trial—our bitter probation for another and for a better—how strange in its severity would seem the lot of genius in a woman. The keen feeling—the generous enthusiasm—the lofty aspiration—and the delicate perception, are given but to make the possessor unfitted for her actual position. It is well!—such gifts, in their very contrast to the selfishness and the evil with which they are surrounded, inform us of an-

other world—they breathe of their home, which is heaven; the spiritual and the inspired in this life but fit us to believe in that which is to come. With what a sublime faith is this divine reliance expressed in all Mrs Hemans's later writings. As the clouds towards nightfall melt away on a fine summer evening into the clear amber of the west, leaving a soft and unbroken azure whereon the stars may shine; so the troubles of life, its vain regrets and vainer desires, vanished before the calm close of existence—the hopes of heaven rose steadfast at last—the light shone from the windows of her home, as she approached unto it.

'No tears for thee!—though light be from us gone
With thy soul's radiance, bright and restless one!
No tears for thee!
They that have loved an exile must not mourn
To see him parting for his native bourne,
O'er the dark sea.'

"We have noticed this yearning for affection—unsatisfied, but still unsubdued—as one characteristic of Mrs Hemans's poetry: the rich picturesque was another. Highly accomplished, the varied stores that she possessed were all subservient to one master science. Mistress both of German and Spanish, the latter country appears to have peculiarly captivated her imagination. At that period when the fancy is peculiarly alive to impression—when girlhood is so new, that the eagerness of childhood is still in its delights—Spain was, of all others, the country on which public attention was fixed—victory after victory carried the British flag from the ocean to the Pyrenees; but, with that craving for the ideal, which is so great a feature in her writings, the present was insufficient, and she went back upon the past;—the romantic history of the Moors was like a storehouse, with treasures gorgeous like those of its own Alhambra.

"It is observable in her minor poems, that they turn upon an incident rather than a feeling. Feelings, true and deep, are developed; but one single emotion is never the original subject. Some graceful or touching anecdote or situation catches her attention, and its poetry is developed in a strain

of mourning melody, and in a vein of gentle moralising. I always wish, in reading my favourite poets, to know what first suggested my favourite poems. Few things would be more interesting than to know under what circumstances they were composed—how much of individual sentiment there was in each, or how, on some incident seemingly even opposed, they had contrived to ingraft their own associations. What a history of the heart would such annals reveal! Every poem is in itself an impulse.

"Besides the ideal and the picturesque, Mrs Hemans is distinguished by her harmony. I use the word harmony advisedly, in contradistinction to melody. Melody implies something more careless, more simple, than belongs to her style: it is song by snatches; our English ballads are remarkable for it. To quote an instance or two. There is a verse in that of *Yarrow Water*—

'O wind that wandereth from the south!
Seek where my love repaireth,
And blow a kiss to his dear mouth,
And tell me how he fareth.'

Nothing can exceed the tender sweetness of these lines; but there is no skill. Again, in *Faire Rosamonde*, the verse that describes the cruelty of Eleanor—

'With that she struck her on the mouth,
So dyed double red;
Hard was the heart that gave the blow,
Soft were the lips that bled.'

How musical is the alliteration! but it is music which, like that of the singing brook, has sprung up of itself. Now, Mrs Hemans has the most perfect skill in her science; nothing can be more polished than her versification. Every poem is like a piece of music, with its eloquent pauses, its rich combinations, and its swelling chords. Who that has ever heard, can forget the exquisite flow of 'The Voice of Spring?'—

'I come! I come!—ye have call'd me long:
I come o'er the mountains with light and song!
Ye may trace my step o'er the wakening earth,
By the winds that tell of the violet's birth,

> By the primrose stars in the shadowy grass,
> By the green leaves opening as I pass.'

It is like the finest order of Italian singing—pure, high, and scientific.

"I can never sufficiently regret that it was not my good fortune to know Mrs Hemans personally: it was an honour I should have estimated so highly—a happiness that I should have enjoyed so keenly. I never even met with an acquaintance of hers but once; that once, however, was much. I knew Miss Jewsbury, the late lamented Mrs Fletcher. She delighted in speaking of Mrs Hemans: she spoke of her with the appreciation of one fine mind comprehending another, and with the earnest affection of a woman and a friend. She described her conversation as singularly fascinating—full of poetry, very felicitous in illustration by anecdote—happy, too, in quotation, and very rich in imagery; 'in short, her own poem on "The Treasures of the Deep" would best describe it.' She mentioned a very striking simile to which a conversation on Mrs Hemans's own poem of 'The Sceptic' had led:—'Like Sinbad, the sailor, we are often shipwrecked on a strange shore. We despair; but hope comes when least expected. We pass through the gloomy caverns of doubt into the free air and blessed sunshine of conviction and belief.' I asked her if she thought Mrs Hemans a happy person; and she said, 'No; her enjoyment is feverish, and she desponds. She is like a lamp whose oil is consumed by the very light which it yields.' What a cruel thing is the weakness of memory! How little can its utmost efforts recall of conversation that was once an instruction and a delight!

"To the three characteristics of Mrs Hemans's poetry which have already been mentioned—viz. the ideal, the picturesque, and the harmonious—a fourth must be added—the moral. Nothing can be more pure, more feminine and exalted, than the spirit which pervades the whole; it is the intuitive sense of right, elevated and strengthened into a principle. It is a glorious and a beautiful memory to bequeath; but she who

left it is little to be envied. Open the volumes which she has left, legacies from many various hours, and what a record of wasted feelings and disappointed hopes may be traced in their sad and sweet complainings! Yet Mrs Hemans was spared some of the keenest mortifications of a literary career. She knew nothing of it as a profession which has to make its way through poverty, neglect, and obstacles: she lived apart in a small, affectionate circle of friends. The high-road of life, with its crowds and contention—its heat, its noise, and its dust that rests on all—was for her happily at a distance; yet even in such green nest, the bird could not fold its wings, and sleep to its own music. There came the aspiring, the unrest, the aching sense of being misunderstood, the consciousness that those a thousand times inferior were yet more beloved. Genius places a woman in an unnatural position; notoriety frightens away affection; and superiority has for its attendant fear, not love. Its pleasantest emotions are too vivid to be lasting: hope may sometimes,

> 'Raising its bright face,
> With a free gush of sunny tears, erase
> The characters of anguish:'

but, like the azure glimpses between thunder-showers, the clouds gather more darkly around for the passing sunshine. The heart sinks back on its solitary desolation. In every page of Mrs Hemans's writings is this sentiment impressed. What is the conclusion of 'Corinne crowned at the Capitol?'

> 'Radiant daughter of the sun!
> Now thy living wreath is won.
> Crown'd of Rome!—oh, art thou not
> Happy in that glorious lot?
> Happier, happier far than thou
> With the laurel on thy brow,
> She that makes the humblest hearth
> Lovely but to one on earth.'

"What is poetry, and what is a poetical career? The first is to have an organisation of extreme sensibility, which the second exposes bareheaded to the rudest weather. The ori-

ginal impulse is irresistible—all professions are engrossing when once begun; and, acting with perpetual stimulus, nothing takes more complete possession of its follower than literature. But never can success repay its cost. The work appears—it lives in the light of popular applause; but truly might the writer exclaim—

> 'It is my youth—it is my bloom—it is my glad free heart
> I cast away for thee—for thee—ill-fated as thou art.'

If this be true even of one sex, how much more true of the other! Ah! Fame to a woman is indeed but a royal mourning in purple for happiness."—MISS LANDON, in *New Monthly Magazine* for August 1835.

"THOUGH respect for the memory of the dead, and delicacy towards the living, enjoin us to be brief in alluding to the events of her life, we may speak freely, and at length, of the history of her mind, and the circumstances of her literary career, in the course of which she deserved and acquired a European reputation as the first of our poetesses living, and still before the public. Few have written so much or written so well as Mrs Hemans; few have entwined the genuine fresh thoughts and impressions of their own minds so intimately with their poetical fancies, as she did; few have undergone more arduous and reverential preparation for the service of song; for, from childhood, her thirst for knowledge was extreme, and her reading great and varied. Those who, while admitting the high-toned beauty of her poetry, accused it of monotony of style and subject (they could not deny to it the praise of originality, seeing that it founded a school of imitators in England, and a yet larger in America), little knew to what historical research she had applied herself—how far and wide she had sought for food with which to fill her eager mind. It is true that she used only a part of the mass of information which she had collected—(for she never wrote on calculation, but from the strong impulse of the moment; and it was her nature intimately to take home to herself and appropriate only what was high-hearted, imaginative, and refined);—but the writer of this notice has seen manuscript

collections of extracts made in the course of these youthful studies, sufficient of themselves to justify his assertion, if her poems (like those of every genuine poet) did not contain a still better record of the progress of her mind. Her knowledge of classic literature may be distinctly traced in her 'Sceptic,' her 'Modern Greece,' and a hundred later lyrics based upon what Bulwer so happily calls 'the Graceful Superstition.' Her study and admiration of the works of ancient Greek and Roman art, strengthened into an abiding love of the beautiful, which breathes both in the sentiment and in the structure of every line she wrote (for there are few of our poets more faultlessly musical in their versification); and when, subsequently, she opened for herself the treasuries of Spanish and German legend and literature, how thoroughly she had imbued herself with their spirit may be seen in her 'Siege of Valencia,' in her glorious and chivalresque 'Songs of the Cid,' and in her 'Lays of Many Lands,' the idea of which was suggested by Herder's 'Stimmen der Völker in Liedern.'

"But though her mind was enriched by her wide acquaintance with the poetical and historical literature of other countries, it possessed a strong and decidedly marked character of its own, which coloured all her productions—a character which, though anything but feeble or sentimental, was essentially feminine. An eloquent modern critic (Mrs Jameson) has rightly said, 'that Mrs Hemans's poems could not have been written by a man;' their love is without selfishness, their passion without a stain of this world's coarseness, their high heroism (and to illustrate this assertion we would mention 'Clotilda,' 'The Lady of Provence,' and the 'Switzer's Wife'), unsullied by any grosser alloy of mean ambition. Her religion, too, is essentially womanly, fervent, clinging to belief, and 'hoping on, hoping ever,' in spite of the peculiar trials appointed to her sex, so exquisitely described in the 'Evening Prayer in a Girls' School'—

'Silent tears to weep
And patient smiles to wear through suffering's hour,
And sumless riches from affection's deep!

To pour on broken reeds—a wasted shower!
And to make idols, and to find them clay,
And to bewail that worship.'

"If such was the *mind* of her works, the manner in which she wrought out her conceptions was equally individual and excellent. Her imagination was rich, chaste, and glowing; those who saw only its published fruits little guessed at the extent of its variety.

"It is difficult to enumerate the titles of her principal works. Her first childish efforts were published when she was only thirteen, and we can speak of her subsequent poems, 'Wallace,' 'Dartmoor,' 'The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy,' and her 'Dramatic Scenes,' only from memory. These were, probably, written in the happiest period of her life, when her mind was rapidly developing itself, and its progress was aided by judicious and intelligent counsellors—among whom may be mentioned Bishop Heber. A favourable notice of one of these poems will be found in Lord Byron's letters; and the fame of her opening talent had reached Shelley, who addressed a very singular correspondence to her. With respect to the world in general, her name began to be known by the publication of her 'Welsh Melodies,' her 'Siege of Valencia,' and the scattered lyrics which appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine*, then under the direction of Campbell. She had previously contributed a series of prose papers, on Foreign Literature, to *Constable's Edinburgh Magazine*, which, with little exception, are the only specimens of that style of writing ever attempted by her. To the 'Siege of Valencia,' succeeded rapidly her 'Forest Sanctuary,' her 'Records of Woman' (the most successful of her works), her 'Songs of the Affections' (containing, perhaps, her finest poem, 'The Spirit's Return'), her 'National Lyrics and Songs for Music' (most of which have been set to music by her sister, and become popular), and her 'Scenes and Hymns of Life.' A few words with respect to the direction of her powers in later days may be worthily extracted from a letter of hers which lies now before us. She had been urged by a friend to undertake a prose work, and a series of 'Artistic Novels,' something after the manner of

Tieck, and Goethe's Kunst-Romanen, as likely to be congenial to her own tastes and habits of mind, and to prove most acceptable to the public.

"'I have now,' she says, 'passed through the feverish and somewhat *visionary* state of mind often connected with the passionate study of art in early life; deep affections and deep sorrows seem to have solemnised my whole being, and I now feel as if bound to higher and holier tasks, which, though I may occasionally lay aside, I could not long wander from without some sense of dereliction. I hope it is no self-delusion, but I cannot help sometimes feeling as if it were my true task to enlarge the sphere of sacred poetry, and extend its influence. When you receive my volume of "Scenes and Hymns," you will see what I mean by enlarging its sphere, though my plan as yet is very imperfectly developed.'

"Besides the works here enumerated, we should mention her tragedy, 'The Vespers of Palermo,' which, though containing many fine thoughts and magnificent bursts of poetry, was hardly fitted for the stage; and the songs which she contributed to Colonel Hodges' 'Peninsular Melodies;' and we cannot but once more call the attention of our readers to her last lyric, 'Despondency and Aspiration,' published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for May 1835. It is the song of the swan—its sweetest and its last!"*—H. F. CHORLEY in the *Athenæum*, No. 395.

ON THE POETRY OF MRS HEMANS.

BY PROFESSOR NORTON.

"WE have now received the last of the imperishable gifts of Mrs Hemans's genius. The period of her spirit's trials and sufferings, and its glorious course on earth, has been completed. She has left an unclouded fame; and we may say, in her own words:—

* It has already been shown that this was not the case.

'No tears for thee!—though light be from us gone
With thy soul's radiance: . . . . .
No tears for thee!
They that have loved an exile must not mourn
To see him parting for his native bourne
O'er the dark sea.'

"As this, therefore, will be the last time that we shall review any production of Mrs Hemans, we may be permitted to recall, with a melancholy pleasure, the admiration and delight with which we have followed the progress of her genius. The feelings with which her works are now generally regarded have been expressed in no publication earlier, more frequently, or more warmly, than in our own. Without repeating what we have already said, we shall now endeavour to point out some of their features, considered in relation to that moral culture in which alone such writings can exist.

"Mrs Hemans may be considered as the representative of a new school of poetry, or, to speak more precisely, her poetry discovers characteristics of the highest kind, which belong almost exclusively to that of later times, and have been the result of the gradual advancement, and especially the moral progress, of mankind. It is only when man, under the influence of true religion, feels himself connected with whatever is infinite, that his affections and powers are fully developed. The poetry of an immortal being must be of a different character from that of an earthly being. But, in recurring to the classic poets of antiquity, we find that, in their conceptions, the element of religious faith was wanting. Their mythology was to them no object of sober belief; and, had it been so, was adapted not to produce but to annihilate devotion. They had no thought of regarding the universe as created, animated, and ruled by God's all-powerful and omniscient goodness. To them it was a world of matter,—

'The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty
That had their haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasms and watery depths,'

never existed except in the imagination of modern poets. The beings intended were the 'fair humanities' of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, whose attributes, derived from the baser parts of our nature, were human passions lawlessly indulged, accompanied with more than mortal power. Gibbon, who was anything rather than what he affected to be—a philosopher—speaks of 'the elegant mythology of the Greeks.' The great fountains of their popular and poetical mythology were Homer and Hesiod. Hesiod does not surpass Homer in the agreeable or moral character of his fictions, and, as regards the elegance of the mythology found in the great epic poet, a single passage, if we had no other means of judging, might settle the question—the address of Jupiter to Juno at the commencement of the Fifteenth Book of the *Iliad*:—

'Oh, versed in wiles,
Juno! thy mischief-teeming mind perverse
Hath plotted this; thou hast contrived the hurt
Of Hector, and hast driven his host to flight.
I know not but thyself mayst chance to reap
The first-fruits of thy cunning, scourged by me.
Hast thou forgotten how I hung thee once
On high, with two huge anvils at thy feet,
And bound with force-defying cord of gold
Thy wrists together? In the heights of heaven
Did I suspend thee. With compassion moved,
The assembled gods thy painful sufferings saw,
But help could yield thee none; for whom I seized,
Hurl'd through the portal of the skies, he reach'd
The distant earth, and scarce survived the fall.
. . . . . .
I thus remind thee now, that thou mayst cease
Henceforth from artifice, and mayst be taught
How little all the dalliance and the love,
Which, stealing down from heaven, thou hast by fraud
Obtain'd from me, shall favour thy designs.'

"It may be incidentally remarked, that these lines illustrate not merely the features of the ancient mythology, but also the condition of woman as treated by the heroes of Homer and by his contemporaries. We happen just to have opened upon another striking example of the *elegance* of the ancient mythology during the Augustan age. It is a passage

of Ovid, almost too indecent and silly to be alluded to, though Addison was not ashamed to translate it, beginning—

> 'Fortè Jovem memorant, diffusum nectare, curas
> Seposuisse graves, vacuâque agitasse remissos
> Cum Junone jocos.'*

"From the passage referred to, we may judge something of the convivial manners of the Romans, and of the habits of intercourse between the sexes.

"It is remarkable that, in all religious and moral conceptions, the noblest materials of poetry, the philosophers were very far in advance of the poets. 'The Fables of Hesiod and Homer,' says Plato, 'are especially to be censured. They have uttered the greatest falsehoods concerning the greatest beings.' Referring to the loathsome and abominable fables about Cœlus, Saturn, and Jupiter, he says—'We must not tell our youth that he who commits the greatest iniquity does nothing strange, nor he who inflicts the most cruel punishment upon his father when injured by him; but that he is only doing what was done by the first and greatest of the gods.' A little after he subjoins, 'The chaining of Juno by her son, the throwing of Vulcan from heaven by his father, because he attempted to defend his mother from being beaten, and the battles of the gods described by Homer, are not fictions to be allowed in our city, whether explained allegorically or not.' 'Though we praise many things in Homer,' he says, 'we shall not praise him when he represents Jupiter as sending a lying dream to Agamemnon, nor Æschylus when he makes Thetis complain of having been deceived by Apollo.' 'When any one thus speaks of the gods, we are indignant; we grant no permission for such writings, nor shall we suffer teachers to use them in the instruction of youth.'†

"The poets of this nation did not, in Plato's opinion, re-

* "It is related that Jove chanced, being exhilarated by nectar, to lay aside his weighty cares, and interchange pleasant jokes with idle Juno."

† See *De Republica*, lib. ii. pp. 373-383.

present their heroes as more amiable or respectable than their gods. 'We shall not,' he says, 'suffer those of whom we have the charge to believe that Achilles, the son of a goddess, was so full of evil passions as to unite in himself two opposite vices—avaricious meanness, and insolence towards gods and men. Nor shall we allow it to be said that Theseus, the son of Neptune, and Perithöus, the son of Jove, rushed forth to the commission of such abominable robberies, or that any son of a god or any hero committed those abominable and impious acts which are now imputed to them in the fictions of the poets.' 'Such fictions are pernicious to those who hear them; for every bad man finds a license for himself, in the belief that those nearly related to the gods do and have done such deeds. They are, then, to be suppressed, lest they produce a strong tendency to wickedness in our youth.' *

"Such were the sentiments of the most poetical of Grecian philosophers concerning the religious and moral character of the poets of his nation; and he remarks in addition upon the gloomy fancies of Homer concerning the state of departed souls, as neither true nor useful, but adapted to produce unmanly fears, and therefore not to be listened to by those who, as freemen, should dread slavery more than death. During the period between Homer and Virgil, a misty brightness had spread over the poetic ideas of the future abodes of the blessed; but the Elysium and Tartarus of poetry were but fictions, awakening no serious hopes nor fears, and having no power over the heart. These imaginations of a future life were connected with no just and ennobling conceptions of the purposes of our existence, of the spiritual nature of man, or of that endless progress to which we may look forward. The heroes of Elysium found their delight in the meaner pleasures of this life.

'Quæ gratia currum
Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes
Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.

* See *De Republica*, lib. iii. p. 391.

Conspicit, ecce, alios dextra lævaque per herbam
Vescentes, lætumque chora pæana canentes.' *

"Thus the ancient poets were shut out from the whole sphere of religious sentiment; and all those numberless conceptions and feelings that spring from our knowledge of God and the sense of our own immortality, are absent from their writings, while this whole exhaustless domain has been laid open to the poets of later times. A single example may illustrate what has been said. Let us take the concluding verses of Mrs Hemans's 'Fountain of Oblivion':—

'Fill with forgetfulness!—there are, there *are*
Voices whose music I have loved too well;
Eyes of deep gentleness—but they are far—
Never! oh! never, in my home to dwell!
Take their soft looks from off my yearning soul—
Fill high th' oblivious bowl!

'Yet pause again!—with memory wilt thou cast
The undying hope away, of memory born?
Hope of re-union: heart to heart at last;
No restless doubt between, no rankling thorn?
Wouldst thou erase all records of delight
That make such visions bright?

'Fill with forgetfulness, fill high!—yet stay—
'Tis from the past we shadow forth the land
Where smiles, long lost, again shall light our way,
And the soul's friends be wreathed in one bright band.
Pour the sweet waters back on their own rill:
I *must* remember still.

'For their sake, for the dead—whose image nought
May dim within the temple of my breast—
For their love's sake, which now no earthly thought
May shake or trouble with its own unrest,
Though the past haunt me as a spirit—yet
I ask not to forget.'

"The whole train of emotion and thought in these verses is of a character wholly unknown to the classic days of Greece

* "The love of horses which they had alive,
And care of chariots, after death survive.
In bands reclining on the grassy plain,
They feasted and pour'd forth a joyful strain."
See DRYDEN'S *Virgil.*

and Rome. To imagine anything corresponding to it in the work of an ancient poet, is to bring together conceptions the most incongruous.

"Here it may be worth while, in order to prevent ourselves from being misunderstood, to observe, that we do not mean to depreciate the value of the study of the ancient poets. After those inquiries by which the truths of religion are established, there are none of more interest or importance than such as relate to the mind and heart of man, and open to us a knowledge of what he has been, and what he may be on earth. But, to attain this knowledge, we must acquaint ourselves with the moral and intellectual character of our race, as it has existed, and exists, under influences and forms of society very unlike each other. In this research, no period can be compared in interest with a few centuries in the history of Athens and Rome, which have left traces still so deeply impressed upon the civilised world. Thus, in studying the history of human nature, the Grecian and Roman poets furnish some of our most important materials. We may discover in them a source of sentiments and opinions that still affect men's minds. Homer carries us back to remote Pagan antiquity, on which his writings shed a light afforded by no other; and, at the same time, having been regarded as the undisputed master-poet by his countrymen (for this Plato himself does not question), he shows us what were the topics by which their imaginations were most affected during the period of their greatest civilisation. The dramatic poets of Athens reflect the Athenian character; and in Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, we find the lineaments of the Augustan age. But the value which thus attaches to their works is not to be confounded with the absolute value of those works as poems adapted through their intrinsic beauties to give delight at the present day. In estimating their naked worth, we must likewise separate from them the interest connected with their antiquity, and all those accidental associations that have been gathering round them for many centuries. We must even put out of view the native genius of the writer, if this genius have been exerted under circum-

stances so unfavourable as to render it ineffectual to produce what may give pleasure to a pure and highly-cultivated mind. Notwithstanding the traditionary enthusiasm that has existed on the subject, it may well be doubted whether their power of giving vivid pleasure merely as poetical compositions, forms a principal recommendation of the study of the ancient poets. They were not acquainted with the richest realms of mind. It is a mistake to address them as 'bards illustrious, *born in happier days.*' But, to return to our immediate subject.

"After the revival of letters, the forms of what was called Christianity, both among Catholics and Protestants, were in many respects so abhorrent to reason, or feeling, or both, that they could combine in no intimate union with our higher nature, however they might operate on men's passions or fears. Religious truth was, however, sometimes contemplated in greater purity by minds of the better class; and we early begin to find in poetry some expressions of true religious sentiment. But what advance had been actually made even in the seventeenth century, we may learn from the great work of Milton. It is based on a system of mythology more sublime than the Pagan, and less adapted to degrade the moral feelings, but scarcely less offensive to reason, and spreading all but a Manichæan gloom and blight over the creation of God. Putting forth his vast genius, he struggles with it as he can, moulding it into colossal forms that repel our human sympathies, and lavishing upon it gorgeous treasures of imagination; but even his powers yield and sink at times before its intrinsic incongruity and essential falsehood. Whoever rightly apprehends the character of God, or contemplates as he ought the invisible world, will turn to but few pages of the *Paradise Lost*, with the hope of finding expressions corresponding to his thoughts and emotions. We feel with pain the inappreciable contrast between the genius displayed in the poetical execution of the work, and the absurdity of its prose story. It is the opposition which this story presents to the most ennobling truths, even more than 'the want of human interest,' on which Johnson remarks, that gives to the poem the unattractive

character of which he speaks, and which we believe is felt by almost all its readers.

"Doubtless pure religious sentiment breaks out in this and in the other poems of Milton. The concluding line of his Sonnet on his Blindness,

'They also serve who only stand and wait,'

and numerous other passages of similar beauty, have, we may believe, found an answering feeling in many hearts. But in speaking of those causes which have given a new character to the poetry of later times, it is not our purpose to trace their influence historically. Going back to the days of Grecian and Roman civilisation, we shall take only a few illustrations that may serve to show more clearly the contrast produced by their absence on one hand, or their operation on the other.

"In proportion as we contemplate the world from the height to which true religion conducts us, we perceive the circle of moral action widening indefinitely. Our duties toward the inferior animals are few and low, compared with those which we lie under to our fellow-men; and our duties toward our fellow-men become far more extensive, and assume a more solemn character, when we regard them not as born to perish upon earth, but as commencing here an unending existence. Our obligations to others correspond to our means of serving them; and we are introduced to a higher class of virtues, as soon as we recognise in those around us beings forming characters for a different mode of existence, to whom the highest service that can be rendered is to assist their progress in virtue, and to whom some influence, good or evil, is continually flowing out from us, and diverging into channels of which we cannot see the termination. All interest in the spiritual and imperishable good of our fellow-men must depend upon our regarding them as spiritual and imperishable. It is only under a sense of our true nature, that man is capable of reaching the sublime thought of assimilating himself to God, by devoting his powers to the moral welfare of his fellow-men.

'*Yet*, yet sustain me, Holiest!—I am vowed
To solemn service high;
And shall the spirit, for thy tasks endowed,
Sink on the threshold of the sanctuary,
Fainting beneath the burden of the day,
Because no human tone
Unto the altar-stone
Of that pure spousal fane inviolate,
Where it should make eternal truth its mate,
May cheer the sacred solitary way?

'Oh! be the whisper of thy voice within
Enough to strengthen! Be the hope to win
A more deep-seeing homage for thy name,
Far, far beyond the burning dream of fame!
Make me thine only! Let me add but one
To those refulgent steps all undefiled,
Which glorious minds have piled
Through bright self-offering, earnest, child-like, lone,
For mounting to thy throne;
And let my soul, upborne
On wings of inner morn,
Find, in illumined secresy, the sense
Of that blest work, its own high recompense.'

"But there is more to be considered. The conduct which would be wise and right for man if immortal, would not be wise and right for him if viewed as a perishing animal. It is true that moral good is always good, and moral evil always evil; but with an essential change in our nature and relations, there must likewise be an essential change in what is morally good or evil. If all human hopes were limited to this world, it would be folly for any one to act as if he and others were to exist for ever. The whole plan of life and of its duties formed by a wise man, would be quite different in the one case from what it would be in the other; and the course of life actually pursued by the generality, if destitute of all religious belief, would be still more unlike that of men under its influence.

'Sapias, vina liques, et spatio brevi
Spem longam reseces.'*

* Be wise, pour out your wine, and contract your hopes within life's narrow compass.

'Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?' *

'Lætus in præsens, animus quod ultra est
Oderit curare, et amara lento
Temperet risu.' †

In the absence of religious faith, this is true philosophy. If this life were the limit of our being, its pleasures and pains would be the only objects of our concern. Nothing would be virtuous which tended not to the attainment and communication of those limited and perishing pleasures we might here partake; nothing morally evil, but what lessened our own capacity for enjoying them, or tended to prevent others from sharing them with us. There would be no sphere for the exercise of those powers, no object for those capacities of happiness, that belong to the imperishable part of our nature. There would be nothing to prompt one to great sacrifices or acts of moral heroism; for these have their source in the consciousness of immortality, in a sense of our connection with the infinite, our look forward to good for ourselves and others beyond the limits of life. Earthly motives afford no soil in which the nobler virtues can strike their roots. It is true that the ancients, particularly the ancient philosophers, were not without the influence of truly religious conceptions, and under almost any forms of opinion the better nature of man will of itself occasionally break out into exhibitions of excellence. But the religious sentiment being so weak and perverted among the ancient poets, we find little in their works that can be regarded as morally noble, and scarcely an indistinct recognition of those deep feelings and unearthly virtues which have their source in our spiritual nature. The same remark is almost equally applicable to a large proportion of the modern poets; for true religion has been little understood or felt by them. Where, in any age preceding our own, may we hope

* Why, in so short a life, do we, in our bravery, aim at so much?
† Joyous during the present hour, the mind should reject all care for what is beyond, and temper what is bitter with a gentle smile.

to find such expressions of sentiment as in the following verses from Mrs Hemans's 'Vaudois Wife'*—

'But calm thee! Let the thought of death
A solemn peace restore;
The voice that must be silent soon,
Would speak to thee once more:
That thou may'st bear its blessing on
Through years of after life—
A token of consoling love,
Even from this hour of strife.

'I bless thee for the noble heart,
The tender, and the true,
Where mine hath found the happiest rest
That e'er fond woman's knew;
I bless thee, faithful friend and guide!
For my own, my treasured share
In the mournful secrets of thy soul,
In thy sorrow, in thy prayer.
* * * *

'I bless thee for the last rich boon
Won from affection tried—
The right to gaze on death with thee,
To perish by thy side!
And yet more for the glorious hope
Even to *these* moments given—
Did not *thy* spirit ever lift
The trust of *mine* to heaven?

'Now be *thou* strong! Oh, knew we not
Our path must lead to this?
A shadow and a trembling still
Were mingled with our bliss!
We plighted our young hearts when storms
Were dark upon the sky,
In full, deep knowledge of their task—
To suffer and to die!

'Be strong! I leave the living voice
Of this, my martyr'd blood,
With the thousand echoes of the hills,
With the torrent's foaming flood,—
A spirit midst the caves to dwell,
A token on the air,
To rouse the valiant from repose,
The fainting from despair.

* 'The wife of a Vaudois leader, in one of the attacks made on the Protestant hamlets, received a mortal wound, and died in her husband's arms, exhorting him to courage and endurance.'

'Hear it, and bear thou on, my love!
Ay, joyously endure!
Our mountains must be altars yet,
Inviolate and pure;
There must our God be worshipped still
With the worship of the free;—
Farewell!—there's but *one* pang in death,
One only—leaving thee!'

"With this may be compared the speech of Alcestis in Euripides, when dying in the presence of her husband, under circumstances adapted to call forth all that power of expressing the tender emotions, for which Euripides has been thought to be distinguished.

"Under the influence of religion we are acted upon by new motives, through the sense created within us, of the worth of our fellow-men. Religion invests them with a new character, strips off the disguise with which the accidents of mortality, its imperfections, weaknesses, follies, miseries, and crimes hide their essential nature from our view, and presents them before us with all the interests and capacities of immortal beings. They who are dear to us are worthy of all love and self-devotion, worthy of affections unlimited by death or time. They are members with us of the imperishable family of God, in whose company we are to exist for ever, and with whom our union will become more entire, as we grow purer and more disinterested.

"Thus in later days there has been a growth of sentiments and affections, almost unknown before. Our better feelings toward our fellow-men have acquired far more strength, and assumed new forms. In other times, man has been comparatively an insulated being. Domestic life—that life in which now almost all our joys or sorrows are centred—was scarcely known to the ancients; and it has had but a sickly and artificial existence even in modern ages, through the operation of false notions of domestic government and discipline, and of the mutual relations of husband and wife, parents and children. Religion, by teaching us justly to estimate what is truly excellent in our nature, what is intellectual, moral, and ever-enduring, has given to woman the rank to which she is entitled. It has made

her the friend of man; and our feelings are in harmony with the poet when he speaks of

> 'A perfect woman, nobly plann'd
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a spirit still and bright,
> With something of an angel light.'

But man has never regarded woman with respect and true love, except so far as he has regarded her as a spiritual and immortal being. Without this, no conception can exist of that inseparable union which blends all the interests and affections of one being with those of another. The poetry of the ancients that expresses any sentiments toward the female sex is, with rare exceptions, of the grossest kind—sensual, coarse, indecent, brutal. We can pick out only a few passages from the mass which shadow forth anything like real affection. The same character has continued to cleave to much of our modern poetry, rendering it at once pernicious and disgusting. But wherever the power of true religion has been felt, there woman, more disinterested, more pure, and more moral than man, has exerted a constant influence to raise the character of society. Where it has not been felt, woman has been treated as a mere creature of this earth, an object only of sensual passion, courted, wronged, and insulted; her character has sunk, and the infection of the evil has spread itself everywhere. It would be difficult, in as few words, to suggest to a reflecting mind, a more melancholy picture of the state of society at Athens, than that of which Aristotle affords us a glimpse in a short passage of his 'Art of Poetry,' where he remarks, with his usual brevity and dryness, that 'the manners (character) of a woman or slave may be good, though in general, perhaps, women are rather bad than good, and slaves altogether bad.' * Where women are thus estimated,

* "What Aristotle says," observes his able translator, Mr Twining, "is, I fear, but too conformable to the manner in which the ancients usually speak of the sex *in general*. At least he is certainly consistent with himself: witness the following very curious character of women in his 'History of Animals,' which I give the reader by no means for his assent, but for his wonder or his diversion." Mr Twining's remarks sufficiently imply of what nature this character is, and we forbear to quote it.

the domestic charities, our best school of virtue, cannot exist: those affections which are at once the gentlest and the strongest have no place; nor will there be any true refinement, nor quick and generous feeling in the intercourse between man and man. The first and strongest link in the chain of human sympathy is wanting.

"When Jesus Christ pronounced these words, '*What God has joined together, let not man put asunder,*' he laid down the fundamental law of human civilisation. But it would have been impossible to render marriage the most solemn and indissoluble of connections, if his religion had not at the same time restored to woman the character designed for her by nature, and raised her to that place she now holds, wherever the truths he taught have had somewhat of their proper influence.

"When the feelings that give sanctity to marriage are wanting, the parental affections operate but feebly. The new-born child, instead of being regarded as a gift and a trust from God, a new creature with whom we have become for ever connected, and a living bond of common interest to strengthen the union of its parents, is either looked at, on the one hand, as a present incumbrance, or, on the other, as a probable future support. The whole history of the domestic relations of the ancients establishes this truth. What must have been the state of parental affection among those who practised and tolerated the destruction of infants as a common custom? The absence of such affection is not to be estimated by the number of victims to that custom, but by the fact of its being generally viewed without horror or reprobation. It was a shocking trait of barbarity in the character of the elder Cato, that he recommended that worn-out and disabled slaves should be exposed to perish; but an exposure more inhuman, which showed that man had lost even the feelings of the lower animals, was constantly going on, and was enjoined, under certain circumstances, both by Plato and Aristotle, as a law of their imagined republics. There is a famous saying in one of the comedies of Terence, which has been often quoted as a fine expression of philan-

thropy ; *Homo sum—humani nihil a me alienum puto.** It is put into the mouth of a man whose wife is afterwards represented as in fear before him, because she had not destroyed her female infant as he had commanded, but given it a chance for preservation by causing it to be exposed alive. Maternal love cannot be wholly extinguished ; but it is the glow of modern feeling only which pours its beauty over the following lines, to which nothing parallel can be found in the poets of Greece or Rome, though Mrs Hemans apostrophises the Elysium of their imagining.

'Calm, on its leaf-strewn bier,
Unlike a gift of nature to decay,
Too rose-like still, too beautiful, too dear,
The child at rest before the mother lay,
E'en so to pass away,
With its bright smile. Elysium ! what wert *thou*
To her who wept o'er that young slumberer's brow?
Thou hadst no home, green land !
For the fair creature from her bosom gone,
With life's fresh flowers just opening in its hand,
And all the lovely thoughts and dreams unknown,
Which in its clear eye shone
Like spring's first wakening! But that light was past;—
Where went the dew-drop swept before the blast?'

"The ancient popular faith was indeed destitute of consolation; but in the absence of those associations which shed a holy light round an infant, such consolation is less needed. Even the fountain of maternal affection flows with but a scanty and interrupted stream.

"Thus religion, by making man of more worth to man, and by strengthening our assurance in each other's sympathy and virtue, has called forth affections which lay folded up in our nature, or had put forth only a stinted growth. The finer productions of modern poetry are coloured throughout with expressions of their beauty and strength. Moral qualities, good or bad, as they exist in men, unformed directly or indirectly by religion, owe their strength principally to impulse and passion, or depend, like the inconsistent hospi-

* I am a man ; whatever concerns other men, I think my concern.

tality of the Arab, or the pride of the Roman, on what he thought the glory of his country, upon prejudices which spring partly from generous feelings, and partly from selfish regards, and are made strong and binding upon the individual by universal consent. It is only when quickened by religious sentiment that the human character displays all its complicated variety of feelings. Then affections, which had before seemed almost powerless, become essential elements of our being. Associations, till then unknown, link together their invisible chains; and the feeling with which they thrill us when touched, presents a new phenomenon in our nature. The love of our youthful home may seem to us a universal sentiment, likely to appear in the poetry of all times; yet how little reference to it do we find in any poetry before our own age, and especially how little reference, like the following, to its moral power!

> ' "Hast thou come with the heart of thy childhood back!
> The free, the pure, the kind?"
> —So murmur'd the trees in my homeward track,
> As they play'd to the mountain-wind.
>
> "Hath thy soul been true to its early love?"
> Whisper'd my native streams;
> "Hath the spirit, nursed amidst hill and grove,
> Still revered its first high dreams?" ' &c.

"It is under the continued influence of Christianity, however imperfect that influence may have been, that the human character, which had before manifested itself partially and irregularly in the rudeness and inconsistency of its elementary passions, has begun to struggle toward its full development. It has become alive to feelings, and is putting forth powers, which belong to its immortal nature. We may perceive this unfolding of man in the very structure of language, which, enlarged as it has been with new terms, yet presents so imperfect a means for expressing the different qualities and shades of character, and the modes and combinations of feeling. The study of human nature has thus become a science of far more interest and complexity. Many forms of character now appear, that belong to no period in the progress of the human race preceding that at which we have

arrived. To the eye of the poet, man presents himself in new aspects of strength and weakness in multiform relations to the finite and the infinite, and with all the variety of sentiments resulting from the change in his prospects and hopes. He is now 'a traveller between life and death;' his highest interests connect him with the boundless, the unearthly, and the mysterious; with all that has most power to affect the imagination, and excite the strongest and deepest feelings. It is only through his relations to God and eternity that man becomes an exhaustless subject of high poetry. When thus viewed, his ruined home may be repeopled with thoughts and images such as these :—

'Thou hast heard many sounds, thou hearth,
Deserted now by all!
Voices at eve here met in mirth,
Which eve may ne'er recall.
Youth's buoyant step, and woman's tone,
And childhood's laughing glee,
And song and prayer have all been known,
Hearth of the dead! to thee.

'Thou hast heard blessings fondly poured
Upon the infant head,
As if in every fervent word
The living soul were shed:
Thou hast seen partings,—such as bear
The bloom from life away,—
Alas! for love in changeful air,
Where nought beloved can stay!' &c.

"The recognition of the higher relations of man has given a characteristic to modern poetry, particularly English poetry, through which it has peculiar power over the heart. Expressions and descriptions of human suffering, instead of depressing us with melancholy, become sublime or touching, when that suffering is brought into direct or indirect contrast with man's nature and hopes as an immortal being, or is represented as calling into exercise those virtues which can exist in such a being alone. There is no pathos in the mere lamentations of an individual over his own particular lot, or over the condition of a race to which he feels it an unhappiness to belong. There is nothing that excites any

tender or elevating feeling in such verses as the following from an ancient poet:—

'Is there a man just, honest, nobly born?
Malice shall hunt him down. Does wealth attend him?
Trouble is hard behind. Conscience direct?
Beggary is at his heels. . . . .
. . . . . Account that day
Which brings no new mischance, a day of rest.
For what is man? What matter is he made of?
How born? What is he, and what shall he be?
What an unnatural parent is this world,
To foster none but villains, and destroy
All who are benefactors to mankind!'*

"The sufferings to which we are here exposed cease to be a subject that leads to any grateful or ennobling state of mind, when man regards the pleasures of this life as his only good. Among the ancient poets, the contemplation of its evils, when viewed at a distance, is associated with sentiments simply disheartening, or altogether superficial and trifling. Let us take for example a famous ode of Horace. It begins:—

'Eheu! fugaces, Postume, Postume,
Labuntur anni; nec pietas moram
Rugis et instanti senectæ
Afferet, indomitæque morti.'†

"It ends:—

'Absumet hæres Cæcuba dignior,
Servata centum clavibus; et mero

---

* The original is ascribed to Sotades. See Cumberland's "Observer," No. 147. Cumberland says, "There is a melancholy grandeur in these sentiments, with a simplicity of expression, which prove to us that these authors (the Greek comic writers) occasionally diverged from the gay spirit of comedy into passages not only of the most serious, but sublimest cast." Cumberland is one of those critics who have regarded themselves as privileged in writing any sort of laudatory nonsense about the ancient poets.

† Alas! my friend, the rapid years
Are gliding on; no prayers delay
Approaching wrinkles, age, and tears,
Or wrest from death's all-conquering sway.

Tinget pavimentum superbo
Pontificum potiore cœnis.' *

"No modern poet would, or rather could, construct verses after this fashion.

"It is in representations of the triumph of our immortal nature over the ills of mortality, of the patience with which they are borne, of the power by which they are overcome—in one word, of the moral qualities which suffering alone brings into action, and in those touches that awaken our best and tenderest affections for the sufferings of others, especially the innocent and helpless, that the sources of the highest pathos are to be found. All that is morally sublime springs upward from our severer trials; and then, only when man feels the nobleness of his nature. Present the calamity nakedly to our view, and its contemplation is merely distressing; picture it in connection with some effort of virtue, and a glory is spread over the whole. In the 'Fall of D'Assas' by Mrs Hemans (not one of the most remarkable of her productions), a young officer, full of the thoughts of his home and the scenes of his earlier years, is represented as surprised and massacred by his enemies. The simple narrative of such a death naturally excites painful emotion, but this emotion is so wholly overborne, as but to give additional strength to the exaltation of feeling produced by the concluding verses:—

'"Silence!" in under-tones they cry—
"No whisper—not a breath!
The sound that warns thy comrades nigh
Shall sentence thee to death!"
Still, at the bayonet's point he stood,
And strong to meet the blow;
And shouted, midst his rushing blood,
"Arm, arm, Auvergne! the foe!"
The stir, the tramp, the bugle-call,—
He heard their tumults grow;
And sent his dying voice through all,—
"*Auvergne, Auvergne! the foe!*"'

* With wine your hundred locks secure,
Some worthier heir your floors will stain,
Lavish of draughts more rich and pure
Than our high priests are wont to drain.

"We may compare the poem just quoted with a passage from Virgil, which refers to circumstances somewhat similar, and has been praised as very pathetic, in the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, where Nisus perceives that Euryalus has fallen into the hands of his foes, and is just about to be slain.

'Tum vero, exterritus, amens,
Conclamat Nisus: nec se celare tenebris
Amplius, aut tantum potuit perferre dolorem:
"Me, me, adsum qui feci, in me convertite ferrum,
O Rutuli! mea fraus omnis; nihil iste nec ausus,
Nec potuit; cœlum hoc et conscia sidera testor."
Tantum infelicem nimium dilexit amicum.
Talia dicta dabat; sed viribus ensis adactus
Transabiit costas'

"However conspicuous such a passage may be in an ancient poet, it would not, we believe, be regarded with great admiration in a modern.

"In one of Miss Edgeworth's little stories for children, which are far better worth reading than most books for grown people, she says of the cottage of some poor woman, that *it was as clean as misery could make it.* There is a pathos in these few words, not unusual in her writings, but such as we can find in but a scanty number of writers before our own age. It has not been well understood, that the indirect expressions of suffering are far more powerful than the direct, and that we are much more affected by suppressed, than by unrestrained emotion. In but little of the poetry of past times is there any trace of quickness or delicacy of perception in regard to the modes or expressions of human feeling and passion; for man himself had not become sufficiently refined for the exercise of such observation. Plato objects to Homer and the tragic poets of Greece, that they degraded men's minds by representing their heroes, when suffering, as pouring forth long lamentations, singing their sorrows, and beating their breasts. So far as they did so, there was nothing pathetic in their writings. Who indeed, in modern times, was ever able to imagine himself affected by the sorrows of Achilles for the death of Patroclus, or those of his mother Thetis, in consequence?

"From the want of sentiment and of moral associations, the descriptive language of the ancient poets is, in general, scanty and poor. It is for the most part drawn immediately from the perceptions of the senses, and has little to do with the invisible feelings and images, of which outward things become the symbols to a reflecting mind. It rarely gives them a moral being; its epithets are seldom imaginative; it paints to the eye; it calls up recollections of bodily rest and pleasure; but it does not often address the heart.

"Horace begins one of his odes thus:—

'Vides, ut altâ stet nive candidum
Soracte; nec jam sustineant onus
Sylvæ laborantes, geluque
Flumina constiterint acuto?' *

"The epithets *white* mountain, *deep* snow, *sharp* frost, are all taken without addition immediately from the perception of the senses; nor, considering the common prosaic use of *laboro*, in a similar sense, is the epithet *labouring* much more poetical; yet the passage is as striking of its kind as most that may be found in Latin poetry. The lines are thus rendered by Dryden:—

'Behold yon mountain's hoary height
Made higher with new mounts of snow;
Again behold the winter's weight
Oppress the labouring woods below;
And streams, with icy fetters bound,
Benumb'd and cramp'd to solid ground.'

"Dryden was not eminent for his love of nature or power of describing its beauties; and a poet of livelier perceptions would hardly have changed the name of Soracte for the faint generalisation, 'yon mountain;' yet something of the difference which we wish to point out between ancient and modern poetry, is here perceptible. Let us take from

* See how Soracte stands white with deep snow; the labouring woods cannot bear up under their load, and the streams are stopped by the sharp frost.

Mrs Hemans an example of the richly imaginative character of that of later times. We will give the beginning of the verses in which she describes herself as reading, in an arbour, 'The Talisman' of Scott. A particular interest attaches to them from the circumstance, that in the best portrait of her she is represented in this real or imaginary situation.

'There were thick leaves above me and around,
And low sweet sighs, like those of childhood's sleep,
Amidst their dimness, and a fitful sound
As of soft showers on water; dark and deep
Lay the oak shadows o'er the turf, so still
They seem'd but pictured glooms: a hidden rill
Made music, such as haunts us in a dream,
Under the fern tufts; and a tender gleam
Of soft green light, as by the glow-worm shed,
Came pouring through the woven beach-boughs down,
And steep'd the magic page wherein I read
Of royal chivalry and old renown,
A tale of Palestine.* Meanwhile the bee
Swept past me with a tone of summer hours,
A drowsy bugle, wafting thoughts of flowers,
Blue skies, and amber sunshine: brightly free,
On filmy wings the purple dragon-fly
Shot glancing like a fairy javelin by;
And a sweet voice of sorrow told the dell
Where sat the lone wood-pigeon.'

"Every subject becomes rich in proportion to the wealth of the mind by which it is contemplated. The intellectual light that shines upon it gives it its colours. Deficient as the ancient poets were in so many sources of thought and feeling that exist in modern times, they discover as imperfect a sensibility to most of the other pleasures of a refined taste, as to those derived from the objects of nature. There is to be found, for instance, in their works, scarcely a single passage, perhaps not one, in which the power of music, as blending in intimate union sensible and intellectual pleasures, is described with strong expression; yet what a treasury of glowing images and solemn thoughts

* Palestine—"Tales of the Crusaders."

this subject has opened to modern poets. We need not quote for illustration Mrs Hemans's 'Triumphant Music.'

"Through our strong sympathy with our fellow-men, we are deeply interested in the remains of antiquity, in the ruins that recall it to our thoughts, and in the histories which have come down to us—or rather in those histories as fashioned anew by our imagination, effacing and softening, filling up the rude outline, and colouring and embellishing at pleasure. In proportion as we have a more vivid conception of the virtues and excellences of which man is capable, so man, as such, becomes more an object of our regard. In looking back through the obscurity of time, the depravity that would have shocked us, if forced upon our observation, is partially lost in the darkness, and the bright traits of character shine out more distinctly. The dead of past ages are regarded with something of the same tenderness that we feel toward the dead whom we have known. At least we consent for a time to sacrifice our philosophy to an illusion, and instead of the Richard Cœur-de-Lion of history, whose only marked characteristics were bodily strength and brutal hardihood, with those few gleams of goodness which nothing but the grossest sensuality can utterly extinguish, we consent for a time to take the Richard of Scott's 'Ivanhoe;' or, in fancying the Augustan age, are willing to forget that it took its name from

> 'him who murder'd Tully,
> That cold villain, Octavius.'

"Conformably to the laws of our better nature, our imagination is most readily attracted by what is most excellent in man. While viewing a beautiful tract of country with which we are not familiar, we can hardly refrain from idealising its supposed inhabitants, and giving them somewhat of a poetical character, or, in other words, a character agreeable to our best feelings. So it is in casting our view over past ages. Our sympathies are excited for the hopes and fears, and the virtues, such as they were, of those who have lost all power to injure; and we may even fashion dim images of what they now are, as existing somewhere in the

creation of God, divested, perhaps, of the evil that clung to them on earth. The idea of that moral purification and development, which, we believe, is continually going on in the universe, may thus mingle with the contemplation of the past. It is in transferring us into a world in which grateful imaginations are blended with truth, and the harshness of present reality is shut out, that the poetic interest of antiquity principally consists.

"Of this, modern poetry and fiction have abundantly availed themselves. But though a shadowy antiquity lay as a background to Greek and Roman civilisation, yet it was rarely resorted to by the ancient poets as a source of pleasing or solemn emotions. To them the remoter ages were little more than a desert abounding with monstrous fictions, with licentious and savage divinities, half-brutal demigods, and heroes and chiefs hardly human, whose fabulous deeds and sufferings present nothing to recommend them to our sense of beauty. In the period following, history assumed at least an air of truth, and men appeared on the stage with human feelings, passions, and virtues. But in looking back upon their earlier history, the ancients seem to have felt but slightly those peculiar sentiments and trains of feeling, which the contemplation of antiquity now awakens in our breasts. In no ancient poet is there a celebration of a hero of his country to be compared with Mrs Hemans's lines on the Scottish patriot Wallace, beginning

> 'Rest with the brave, whose names belong
> To the high sanctity of song.'

There is no appeal to the deeds of their fathers equal to her Spanish war-song—

> 'Fling forth the proud banner of Leon again;
> Let the high word '*Castile*' go resounding through Spain.'

No poetic conception of antiquity is to be found resembling the introduction of her 'Cathedral Hymn'—

> 'A dim and mighty minster of old time,
> A temple, shadowy with remembrances
> Of the majestic past!'

And above all, there is nothing so morally ennobling, so adapted to raise the character of a people, as the verses by which she has conferred a great obligation on our country —her 'Pilgrim Fathers.'

"But, beside the advantages afforded to a modern poet by the religious and moral improvement of our race, which it has been principally our object to point out, there are others at which we may glance. He may look back over many ages, and around upon all countries, and acquaint himself with man, as he has existed and exists under circumstances the most dissimilar. He may possess himself of all that knowledge of human nature which has been gathered from long experience, and wide observation, and multiplied opportunities of comparison. He may, like Southey, construct poems as wild and wondrous, and as morally beautiful as 'Thalaba,' or as rich with barbaric splendour as 'The Curse of Kehama,' from the rude materials of Arabian fiction or Hindoo mythology. The treasures of learning and science, so poor in ancient times, have, through succeeding ages, been accumulating to furnish him with thoughts, illustrations, and images. Our conceptions are enlarged, our views raised, the physical as well as the moral universe has been continually opening to the view of man, and knowledge unfolding her ever-lengthening scroll, of which the ancients had scarcely read the first lines. It was a dream, ridiculed by Plato,* of the extravagant admirers of Homer, that all human and divine learning was to be found in his writings.

"In the nature of things art is progressive; its theory and practice are gradually better understood, errors are discovered and corrected, new objects of attainment proposed, and visions of higher excellence revealed to the mind; and thus we may believe, that the character, principles, purposes, and means of poetry are now comprehended more justly than they were in former times.

"But it may be said, that in perfection of language, at least, the poets of Greece and Rome must remain unsur-

* *De Republica*, lib. x. p. 598, *et seq.*

passed. It may be doubted, however, whether we are qualified to pronounce this judgment in their favour. The harmonious flow of articulate sounds in the Greek and Latin languages, particularly in the Latin, is not to be readily attained in some of the principal languages of literary Europe. But if we speak of poetical beauty of expression and harmony of thought, we must recollect, that it is necessary to be acquainted with the train of shadowy associations which follow the direct meaning of a poetical word, before we can determine that word to be well chosen. But such acquaintance implies an intimate knowledge of the use of language and of the state of mind in those addressed, which, as regards the poetry of the ancients, it is very difficult to acquire, and in many particulars impossible, yet without which we are liable to fall into great mistakes, and may often be left in much uncertainty. Take, for example, the line—

'Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.'*

It has been admired from the consonance of the sound with the sense. We understand the epithet *putris* to mean *dusty*—the dusty plain; but this epithet is elsewhere applied to a rich, mellow soil, easily broken up, or to a sandy plain. According to either of these uses, it is apparently an epithet unsuitable, from its associations, to be given to a field described as shaken and resounding with the trampling of a body of horse. As respects, likewise, the epithet *quadrupedans*, we may doubt whether any modern critic can explain why *quadrupedante sonitu* is more poetical in Virgil than its equivalent, 'the sound of quadrupeds,' would be in a modern poet, if used to express the sound of horses.

* "Repeated peals of shouts are heard around;
The neighing coursers answer to the sound,
And shake with horny hoofs the solid ground."
Dryden.

"Loud shouts arise; the thundering coursers bound
Through clouds of dust, and paw the trembling ground."
Pitt.

"Let us take another example:

'Pastor cum *traheret* per freta navibus
Idæis Helenam perfidus hospitam.' *

"Why is the word *traheret* used, which, as employed elsewhere, would imply the taking away of Helen against her will? Does it refer to one version of the story, according to which Paris did bear her away by force? Were this the case, one would naturally expect, considering the reproachful and denunciatory character of the ode, to find that idea brought out more distinctly. Is it intended to express the reluctance with which, though yielding to her love for Paris, she left her husband and her home? This conception is too refined for an ancient poet to trust to its being made apparent by so light a touch, if indeed we may suppose it to have entered his mind. Was *traheret* then intended, by its associations with an act of violence, to denote the rapidity and fear of the flight of Paris? Or was it merely employed *abusively*, to use a technical term, only with reference to a part of its signification, as words are not unfrequently used in poetry, though it is always an imperfection?

"Such cases are very numerous, in which no modern reader can pronounce with just confidence upon the character of the poetical language of the ancients. Instances are frequently occurring in which, if we admire at all, we must admire at second hand, upon trust. The meaning and effect of words have undergone changes which it is often not easy, and often not possible, to ascertain with precision. Even in our own language this is the case. Shakespeare says—

'Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry, Hold! Hold!'

"Here Johnson understands him as presenting the ludicrous conception of 'the ministers of vengeance peeping through a blanket;' and Coleridge, as we see by his *Table-Talk*, conjectured that instead of 'blanket,' 'blank height' was perhaps written by Shakespeare. But by 'Heaven' we

* When the perfidious shepherd *was bearing away*, in Idæan ships through narrow seas, Helen, the wife of his host.

conceive to be meant, not the ministers of vengeance, but the lights of heaven; and it is not unpoetical to speak of the moon and stars as peeping through clouds. With the word 'blanket,' our associations are trivial and low; but understand it merely as denoting a thick covering of darkness which closely enwraps the lights of heaven, and it suits well to its place. But our associations with the word are accidental; there is nothing intrinsically more mean in a blanket than a sheet, yet none would object to the expression of 'a sheet of light.' The fortunes of the words only have been different, and that, in all probability, since the time of Shakespeare, considering his use of this word, and the corresponding use of the word *rug* by Drayton.*

"If such be the character of poetical language, it is clear that to judge with critical accuracy of that of a distant age, or even a foreign land, requires uncommon knowledge and discrimination, as well as an accurate taste; while, unfortunately, profound scholarship and cultivated and elegant habits of mind have very rarely been united in the study of the ancient poets. The supposition of a peculiar felicity of expression in their writings is to be judged of, in most cases, rather by extrinsic probabilities, which do not favour it, than by any direct and clear evidence of it that can be produced. We are very liable in this particular to be biassed by prepossession and authority; our imaginations often deceive us; we create the beauty which we fancy that we find.

"There is perhaps no poet, in whose productions the characteristics of which we have spoken as giving a superiority to the poetry of later times over that which has preceded, appear more strikingly than in those of Mrs Hemans. When, after reading such works as she has written, we turn over the volumes of a collection of English poetry, like that of Chalmers, we cannot but perceive that the greater part of it appears more worthless and distasteful than before. Much is evidently the work of barren and unformed, vulgar and vicious minds, of individuals without any conception of poetry as the glowing expression of what is most noble in

* See examples in the notes to Shakespeare.

our nature, and often with no title to the name of poet, but from having put into metre thoughts too mean for prose. Such writings as those of Mrs Hemans at once afford evidence of the advance of our race, and are among the most important means of its further purification and progress. The minds, which go forth from their privacy to act with strong moral power upon thousands and ten thousands of other minds, are the real agents in advancing the character of man, and improving his condition. They are instruments of the invisible operations of the Spirit of God."—From the *Christian Examiner* of January 1836.

SELECTIONS FROM JUVENILE POEMS.

[In this collected edition of the various writings of Mrs Hemans, chronological arrangement has been adhered to, in so far as any useful purpose could be attained by it; and, when departed from, it has only been to a small extent, and that for the purpose of giving to each volume a greater degree of variety.

In a very general point of view, the intellectual career of Mrs Hemans may be divided, as we have already hinted, into two separate eras,—the first of which may be termed the *classical*, and comprehends the productions of her pen, from "The Restoration of the Works of Art to Italy" and "Modern Greece," down to the "Historic Scenes" and the "Translations from Camoens,"—and the last the *romantic*, which commences with "The Forest Sanctuary," and includes "Records of Woman," together with nearly all her later efforts.

In point of poetical merit, there can be little doubt that the last section far transcends the first, and forms the groundwork—whether we regard conception or execution—on which her peculiar fame will be tested by posterity. The former series of poems, however, must be always reckoned valuable, not only in themselves as compositions, but as showing the progress of an intrinsically poetical mind towards its maturity.

But as noonday has its morning, so even these were only the blossoms from antecedent buds; and, as matter of literary curiosity, we have appended a selection from Mrs Hemans's really juvenile efforts, sufficient to show the first expansions of that genius, which time and exertion afterwards ripened into "the bright consummate flower." Even after the early poetical attempts of Cowley and Pope, of Chatterton, Kirke White, and Byron, some of the following outpourings of poetical sentiment may be read with no common interest.]

JUVENILE POEMS,

BY

FELICIA DOROTHEA BROWNE.

From a Volume of Poems, by FELICIA DOROTHEA BROWNE, published in 1808, containing Pieces written between the ages of eight and thirteen.

ON MY MOTHER'S BIRTH-DAY.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF EIGHT.

CLAD in all their brightest green,
This day the verdant fields are seen;
The tuneful birds begin their lay,
To celebrate thy natal day.

The breeze is still, the sea is calm,
And the whole scene combines to charm;
The flowers revive, this charming May,
Because it is thy natal day.

The sky is blue, the day serene,
And only pleasure now is seen;
The rose, the pink, the tulip gay,
Combine to bless thy natal day.

A PRAYER.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF NINE.

O GOD! my Father and my Friend,
Ever thy blessings to me send;
Let me have Virtue for my guide,
And Wisdom always at my side.
Thus cheerfully through life I'll go,
Nor ever feel the sting of woe;
Contented with the humblest lot—
Happy, though in the meanest cot.

ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF ELEVEN.

THE infant muse, Jehovah! would aspire
To swell the adoration of the lyre:
Source of all good! oh, teach my voice to sing
Thee, from whom Nature's genuine beauties spring;
Thee, God of truth, omnipotent and wise,
Who saidst to Chaos, "let the earth arise."
O Author of the rich luxuriant year!
Love, Truth, and Mercy in thy works appear:
Within their orbs the planets dost Thou keep,
And e'en hast limited the mighty deep.

Oh! could I number thy inspiring ways,
And wake the voice of animated praise!
Ah, no! the theme shall swell a cherub's note;
To Thee celestial hymns of rapture float.
'Tis not for me in lowly strains to sing
Thee, God of mercy,—heaven's immortal King!
Yet to that happiness I'd fain aspire—
Oh! fill my heart with elevated fire:
With angel-songs an artless voice shall blend,
The grateful offering shall to Thee ascend.
Yes! Thou wilt breathe a spirit o'er my lyre,
And "fill my beating heart with sacred fire!"
And when to Thee my youth, my life, I've given,
Raise me to join Eliza,* blest in heaven.

SONNET TO MY MOTHER.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF TWELVE.

To thee, maternal guardian of my youth,
I pour the genuine numbers free from art—
The lays inspired by gratitude and truth;
For thou wilt prize the effusion of the heart.
Oh! be it mine, with sweet and pious care,
To calm thy bosom in the hour of grief;
With soothing tenderness to chase the tear,
With fond endearments to impart relief:
Be mine thy warm affection to repay
With duteous love in thy declining hours;
My filial hand shall strew unfading flowers,
Perennial roses to adorn thy way:
Still may thy grateful children round thee smile—
Their pleasing care affliction shall beguile.

* A sister whom the author had lost.

SONNET.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN.

'Tis sweet to think the spirits of the blest
May hover round the virtuous man's repose;
And oft in visions animate his breast,
And scenes of bright beatitude disclose.
The ministers of Heaven, with pure control,
May bid his sorrow and emotion cease,
Inspire the pious fervour of his soul,
And whisper to his bosom hallow'd peace.
Ah, tender thought! that oft with sweet relief
May charm the bosom of a weeping friend,
Beguile with magic power the tear of grief,
And pensive pleasure with devotion blend;
While oft he fancies music, sweetly faint,
The airy lay of some departed saint.

RURAL WALKS.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN.

Oh! may I ever pass my happy hours
In Cambrian valleys and romantic bowers;
For every spot in sylvan beauty drest,
And every landscape, charms my youthful breast.
And much I love to hail the vernal morn,
When flowers of spring the mossy seat adorn;
And sometimes through the lonely wood I stray,
To cull the tender rosebuds in my way;
And seek in every wild secluded dell
The weeping cowslip and the azure bell;
With all the blossoms, fairer in the dew,
To form the gay festoon of varied hue.

And oft I seek the cultivated green,
The fertile meadow, and the village scene;
Where rosy children sport around the cot,
Or gather woodbine from the garden spot.
And there I wander by the cheerful rill,
That murmurs near the osiers and the mill;
To view the smiling peasants turn the hay,
And listen to their pleasing festive lay.
I love to loiter in the spreading grove,
Or in the mountain scenery to rove;
Where summits rise in awful grace around,
With hoary moss and tufted verdure crown'd;
Where cliffs in solemn majesty are piled,
"And frown upon the vale" with grandeur wild:
And there I view the mouldering tower sublime,
Array'd in all the blending shades of Time.

The airy upland and the woodland green,
The valley, and romantic mountain-scene;
The lowly hermitage, or fair domain,
The dell retired, or willow-shaded lane;
"And every spot in sylvan beauty drest,
And every landscape, charms my youthful breast."

SONNET.

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF THIRTEEN.

I LOVE to hail the mild and balmy hour
When evening spreads around her twilight veil;
When dews descend on every languid flower,
And sweet and tranquil is the summer gale.
Then let me wander by the peaceful tide,
While o'er the wave the breezes lightly play;

To hear the waters murmur as they glide,
To mark the fading smile of closing day.
There let me linger, blest in visions dear,
Till the soft moonbeams tremble on the seas;
While melting sounds decay on fancy's ear,
Of airy music floating on the breeze.
For still when evening sheds the genial dews,
That pensive hour is sacred to the muse.

From "The Domestic Affections and Other Poems," by FELICIA DOROTHEA BROWNE. *Published in* 1812.

TO MY MOTHER.

IF e'er for human bliss or woe
I feel the sympathetic glow;
If e'er my heart has learn'd to know
The generous wish or prayer;
Who sow'd the germ with tender hand?
Who mark'd its infant leaves expand?—
My mother's fostering care.
And if *one* flower of charms refined
May grace the garden of my mind,
'Twas she who nursed it there:
She loved to cherish and to adorn
Each blossom of the soil;
To banish every weed and thorn,
That oft opposed her toil!

And oh! if e'er I sigh'd to claim,
The palm, the living palm of fame,
The glowing wreath of praise;
If e'er I wish'd the glittering stores
That Fortune on her favourite pours;

'Twas but that wealth and fame, if mine,
Round *thee* with streaming rays might shine,
And gild thy sun-bright days!

Yet not that splendour, pomp, and power
Might then irradiate every hour;
For these, my mother! well I know,
On thee no raptures could bestow;—
But could thy bounty, warm and kind,
Be, like thy wishes, *unconfined*,
And fall as manna from the skies,
And bid a train of blessings rise,
Diffusing joy and peace;
The tear-drop, grateful, pure, and bright
For thee would beam with softer light
Than all the diamond's crystal rays,
Than all the emerald's lucid blaze;
And joys of heaven would thrill thy heart
To bid one bosom-grief depart,
One tear, one sorrow cease!

Then, oh! may Heaven, that loves to bless,
Bestow the *power* to cheer distress;
Make *thee* its minister below,
To light the cloudy path of woe;
To visit the deserted cell,
Where indigence is doom'd to dwell;
To raise, when drooping to the earth,
The blossoms of neglected worth;
And round, with liberal hand, dispense
The sunshine of beneficence!

But ah! if Fate should still deny
Delights like these, too rich and high;
If grief and pain thy steps assail,
In life's remote and wintry vale;

Then, as the wild Æolian lyre
Complains with soft entrancing number,
When the lone storm awakes the wire,
And bids enchantment cease to slumber;
So filial love, with soothing voice,
E'en then shall teach thee to rejoice;
E'en *then* shall sweeter, milder sound,
When sorrow's tempest raves around;
While dark misfortune's gales destroy,
The frail mimosa-buds of hope and joy!

TO MY YOUNGER BROTHER,

ON HIS RETURN FROM SPAIN, AFTER THE FATAL RETREAT UNDER SIR JOHN MOORE, AND THE BATTLE OF CORUNNA.

THOUGH dark are the prospects and heavy the hours,
Though life is a desert, and cheerless the way;
Yet still shall affection adorn it with flowers,
Whose fragrance shall never decay!

And lo! to embrace thee, my Brother! she flies,
With artless delight, that no words can bespeak;
With a sunbeam of transport illuming her eyes,
With a smile and a glow on her cheek!

From the trophies of war, from the spear and the shield,
From scenes of destruction, from perils unblest,
Oh! welcome again, to the grove and the field,
To the vale of retirement and rest.

Then warble, sweet muse! with the lyre and the voice,
Oh! gay be the measure and sportive the strain;
For light is my heart, and my spirits rejoice
To meet thee, my Brother! again.

TO MY ELDEST BROTHER,

WITH THE BRITISH ARMY IN PORTUGAL.

How many a day, in various hues array'd,
Bright with gay sunshine, or eclipsed with shade,
How many an hour, on silent wing is past,
O my loved Brother! since we saw thee last!
Since *then* has childhood ripen'd into youth,
And fancy's dreams have fled from sober truth;
Her splendid fabrics melting into air,
As sage experience waved the wand of care!
Yet *still* thine absence wakes the tender sigh,
And the tear trembles in affection's eye!
When shall we meet again?—with glowing ray,
Heart-soothing hope illumes some future day;
Checks the sad thought, beguiles the starting tear,
And sings benignly still—*that* day is near!
She, with bright eye, and soul-bewitching voice,
Wins us to smile, inspires us to rejoice;
Tells that the hour approaches, to restore
Our cherish'd wanderer to his home once more;
Where sacred ties his manly worth endear,
To faith still true, affection still sincere!
Then the past woes, the future's dubious lot,
In that blest meeting shall be *all* forgot!
And joy's full radiance gild that sun-bright hour,
Though all around th' impending storm should lower.

Now distant far, amidst the intrepid host,
Albion's firm sons, on Lusitania's coast,
(That gallant band, in countless dangers tried,
Where glory's pole-star beams their constant guide).
Say, do *thy* thoughts, my Brother, fondly stray
To Cambria's vales and mountains far away?
Does fancy oft in busy day-dreams roam,
And paint the greeting that awaits at home?

Does memory's pencil oft, in mellowing hue,
Dear social scenes, departed joys renew;
In softer tints delighting to retrace
Each tender image and each well-known face?
Yes, wanderer! yes! thy spirit flies to those
Whose love, unalter'd, warm and faithful glows.

Oh! could that love, through life's eventful hours,
Illume thy scenes and strew thy path with flowers!
Perennial joy should harmonise thy breast,
No struggle rend thee, and no cares molest!
But though our tenderness can but bestow
The wish, the hope, the prayer, averting woe,
Still shall it live, with pure, unclouded flame,
In storms, in sunshine, far and near—the same!
Still dwell enthroned within th' unvarying heart,
And, firm and *vital*, but with life depart!

BRONWYLFA, *Feb.* 8, 1811.

LINES

WRITTEN IN THE MEMOIRS OF ELIZABETH SMITH.

O THOU! whose pure, exalted mind,
Lives in this record, fair and bright;
O thou! whose blameless life combined
Soft female charms, and grace refined,
With science and with light!
Celestial maid! whose spirit soar'd
Beyond this vale of tears—
Whose clear, enlighten'd eye explored
The lore of years!

Daughter of Heaven! if *here*, e'en *here*,
The wing of towering thought was thine;
If, on *this* dim and mundane sphere,
Fair truth illumed thy bright career,
With morning-star divine;
How must thy bless'd ethereal soul
Now kindle in her noon-tide ray,
And hail, unfetter'd by control,
The Fount of Day!

E'en *now*, perhaps, thy seraph eyes,
Undimm'd by doubt, nor veil'd by fear,
Behold a chain of wonders rise—
Gaze on the noon-beam of the skies,
Transcendent, pure and clear!
E'en *now*, the fair, the good, the true,
From mortal sight conceal'd,
Bless in one blaze thy raptured view,
In light reveal'd!

If *here*, the lore of distant time,
And learning's flowers were all thine own;
How must thy mind ascend sublime,
Matured in heaven's empyreal clime,
To light's unclouded throne!
Perhaps, e'en *now*, thy kindling glance,
Each orb of living fire explores,
Darts o'er creation's wide expanse,
Admires—adores!

Oh! if that lightning-eye surveys
This dark and sublunary plain,
How must the wreath of human praise
Fade, wither, vanish, in thy gaze,
So dim, so pale, so vain!

How, like a faint and shadowy dream,
Must quiver learning's brightest ray;
While on thine eyes, with lucid stream,
The sun of glory pours his beam,
Perfection's day!

THE SILVER LOCKS.

ADDRESSED TO AN AGED FRIEND.

THOUGH youth may boast the curls that flow
In sunny waves of auburn glow;
As graceful on thy hoary head
Has Time the robe of honour spread,
And there, oh! softly, *softly* shed,
His wreath of snow!

As frost-work on the trees display'd
When weeping Flora leaves the shade,
E'en more than Flora, charms the sight;
E'en so thy locks of purest white
Survive, in age's frost-work bright,
Youth's vernal rose decay'd!

To grace the nymph whose tresses play
Light on the sportive breeze of May,
Let other bards the garland twine,
Where sweets of every hue combine;
Those locks revered, that silvery shine,
Invite my lay!

Less white the summer-cloud sublime,
Less white the winter's fringing rime;
Nor do Belinda's lovelier seem,
(A Poet's blest immortal theme),
Than thine, which wear the moonlight beam
Of reverend Time!

Long may the graceful honours smile,
Like moss on some declining pile;
O! much revered! may filial care
Around thee, duteous, long repair,
Thy joys with tender bliss to share,
Thy pains beguile!

Long, long, ye snowy ringlets wave!
Long, long, your much-loved beauty save!
May bliss your latest evening crown,
Disarm life's winter of its frown,
And soft, ye hoary hairs, go down
In gladness to the grave!

And as the parting beams of day
On mountain snows reflected play,
And tints of roseate lustre shed;
Thus, on the snow that crowns thy head,
May joy, with evening planet, shed
His mildest ray!

Aug. 18, 1809.

THE RUIN AND ITS FLOWERS.

Sweets of the wild! that breathe and bloom
On this lone tower, this ivied wall,
Lend to the gale a rich perfume,
And grace the ruin in its fall.
Though doom'd, remote from careless eye,
To smile, to flourish, and to die
In solitude sublime,
Oh! *ever* may the spring renew,
Your balmy scent and glowing hue,
To deck the robe of time!

Breathe, fragrance! breathe! enrich the air,
Though wasted on its wing unknown!
Blow, flow'rets! blow! though vainly fair,
Neglected and alone!
These flowers that long withstood the blast,
These mossy towers are mouldering fast,
While Flora's children stay—
To mantle o'er the lonely pile,
To gild Destruction with a smile,
And beautify Decay!

Sweets of the wild! uncultured blowing,
Neglected in luxuriance glowing;
From the dark ruins frowning near,
Your charms in brighter tints appear,
And richer blush assume;
You smile with *softer* beauty crown'd,
Whilst all is desolate around,
Like sunshine on a tomb!

Thou hoary pile, majestic still,
Memento of departed fame!
While roving o'er the moss-clad hill,
I ponder on thine ancient name!

Here Grandeur, Beauty, Valour sleep,
That here, so oft, have shone supreme;
While Glory, Honour, Fancy, weep,
That vanish'd is the golden dream!

Where are the banners, waving proud,
To kiss the summer-gale of even—
All purple as the morning cloud,
All streaming to the winds of heaven?

Where is the harp, by rapture strung
To melting song, or martial story?

Where are the lays the minstrel sung
To loveliness or glory?

Lorn Echo of these mouldering walls,
To thee no festal measure calls;
No music through the desert halls,
Awakes thee to rejoice!

How still thy sleep! as death profound—
As if, within this lonely round,
A step—a note—*a whisper'd sound*,
Had ne'er aroused thy voice!

Thou hear'st the zephyr murmuring, dying,
Thou hear'st the foliage waving, sighing;
But ne'er again shall harp or song,
These dark deserted courts along,
Disturb thy calm repose.
The harp is broke, the song is fled,
The voice is hush'd, the bard is dead;
And never shall thy tones repeat
Or lofty strain or carol sweet
With plaintive close!

Proud Castle! though the days are flown
When once thy towers in glory shone;
When music through thy turrets rung,
When banners o'er thy ramparts hung,
Though midst thine arches, frowning lone,
Stern Desolation rear his throne;
And Silence, deep and awful, reign
Where echo'd once the choral strain;
Yet oft, dark ruin! lingering here,
The Muse will hail thee with a tear;
Here when the moonlight, quivering, beams,
And through the fringing ivy streams,

And softens every shade sublime,
And mellows every tint of Time—
Oh! here shall Contemplation love,
Unseen and undisturb'd, to rove;
And bending o'er some mossy tomb,
Where Valour sleeps or Beauties bloom,
Shall weep for Glory's transient day
And Grandeur's evanescent ray;
And list'ning to the swelling blast,
Shall wake the Spirit of the Past,—
Call up the forms of ages fled,
Of warriors and of minstrels dead,
Who sought the field, who struck the lyre,
With all ambition's kindling fire!

Nor wilt thou, Spring! refuse to breathe
Soft odours on this desert air;
Refuse to twine thine earliest wreath,
And fringe these towers with garlands fair!

Sweets of the wild, oh! ever bloom
Unheeded on this ivied wall!
Lend to the gale a rich perfume,
And grace the ruin in its fall!

Thus round Misfortune's holy head,
Would Pity wreaths of honour spread;
Like you, thus blooming on this lonely pile,
She seeks Despair, with heart-reviving smile!

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

Fair Gratitude! in strain sublime,
Swell high to heaven thy tuneful zeal;
And, hailing this auspicious time,
Kneel, Adoration! kneel!

CHORUS.

For lo ! the day, th' immortal day,
When Mercy's full, benignant ray
Chased every gathering cloud away,
And pour'd the noon of light !
Rapture ! be kindling, mounting, glowing,
While from thine eye the tear is flowing,
Pure, warm, and bright !

'Twas on this day, O Love Divine !
The Orient Star's effulgence rose ;
Then waked the Morn, whose eye benign
Shall never, never close !

CHORUS.

Messiah ! be thy name adored,
Eternal, high, redeeming Lord !
By grateful worlds be anthems pour'd—
Emanuel ! Prince of Peace !
This day, from Heaven's empyreal dwelling,
Harp, lyre, and voice, in concert swelling,
Bade discord cease !

Wake the loud pæan, tune the voice,
Children of heaven and sons of earth !
Seraphs and men ! exult, rejoice,
To bless the Saviour's birth !

CHORUS.

Devotion ! light thy purest fire !
Transport ! on cherub wing aspire !
Praise ! wake to Him thy golden lyre,
Strike every thrilling chord !
While, at the Ark of Mercy kneeling,
We own thy grace, reviving, healing,
Redeemer ! Lord !

THE DOMESTIC AFFECTIONS.

WHENCE are those tranquil joys in mercy given,
To light the wilderness with beams of heaven?
To soothe our cares, and through the cloud diffuse
Their temper'd sunshine and celestial hues?
Those pure delights, ordain'd on life to throw
Gleams of the bliss ethereal natures know?
Say, do they grace Ambition's regal throne,
When kneeling myriads call the world his own?
Or dwell with Luxury, in th' enchanted bowers
Where taste and wealth exert *creative* powers?

Favour'd of Heaven! O Genius! are they thine,
When round thy brow the wreaths of glory shine;
While Rapture gazes on thy radiant way,
Midst the bright realms of clear and mental day?
No! sacred joys! 'tis yours to dwell enshrined,
Most fondly cherish'd in the purest mind;
To twine with flowers those loved, endearing ties,
On earth so sweet—so perfect in the skies!

Nursed in the lap of solitude and shade,
The violet smiles, embosom'd in the glade;
There sheds her spirit on the lonely gale,
Gem of seclusion! treasure of the vale!
Thus, far retir'd from life's tumultuous road,
Domestic Bliss has fix'd her calm abode
Where hallow'd Innocence and sweet Repose
May strew her shadowy path with many a rose.
As, when dread thunder shakes the troubled sky,
The cherub Infancy can close its eye,
And sweetly smile, unconscious of a tear,
While viewless angels wave their pinions near;
Thus, while around the storms of Discord roll,
Borne on resistless wing from pole to pole;

While War's red lightnings desolate the ball,
And thrones and empires in destruction fall;
Then calm as evening on the silvery wave,
When the wind slumbers in the ocean cave,
She dwells unruffled, in her bower of rest,
Her empire Home!—her throne, Affection's breast!

For her, sweet Nature wears her loveliest blooms,
And softer sunshine every scene illumes.
When Spring awakes the spirit of the breeze,
Whose light wing undulates the sleeping seas;
When Summer, waving her creative wand,
Bids verdure smile, and glowing life expand;
Or Autumn's pencil sheds, with magic trace,
O'er fading loveliness, a moonlight grace;
Oh! still for her, through Nature's boundless reign,
No charm is lost, no beauty blooms in vain;
While mental peace, o'er every prospect bright,
Throws mellowing tints and harmonising light!
Lo! borne on clouds, in rushing might sublime,
Stern Winter bursting from the polar clime,
Triumphant waves his signal-torch on high,
The blood-red meteor of the northern sky!
And high through darkness rears his giant form,
His throne the billow, and his flag the storm!
Yet then, when bloom and sunshine are no more,
And the wild surges foam along the shore,
Domestic Bliss, *thy* heaven is still serene,
Thy star unclouded, and thy myrtle green!
Thy fane of rest *no* raging storms invade—
Sweet peace is thine, the seraph of the shade!
Clear through the day, her light around thee glows,
And gilds the midnight of thy deep repose!
—Hail, sacred Home! where soft Affection's hand
With flowers of Eden twines her magic band!
Where pure and bright the social ardours rise,
Concentring all their holiest energies!—

When wasting toil has dimm'd the vital flame,
And every power deserts the sinking frame,
Exhausted nature still from sleep implores
The charm that lulls, the manna that restores!
Thus, when oppress'd with rude, tumultuous cares,
To thee, sweet Home! the fainting mind repairs;
Still to thy breast, a wearied pilgrim, flies,
Her ark of refuge from uncertain skies!

Bower of repose! when, torn from all we love,
Through toil we struggle, or through distance rove;
To *thee* we turn, still faithful, from afar—
Thee, our bright vista! thee, our magnet-star!
And from the martial field, the troubled sea,
Unfetter'd thought still roves to bliss and thee!

When ocean-sounds in awful slumber die,
No wave to murmur, and no gale to sigh;
Wide o'er the world when Peace and Midnight reign,
And the moon trembles on the sleeping main;
At that still hour, the sailor wakes to keep,
Midst the dead calm, the vigil of the deep!
No gleaming shores his dim horizon bound,
All heaven—and sea—and solitude—around!
Then, from the lonely deck, the silent helm,
From the wide grandeur of the shadowy realm,
Still homeward borne, his fancy unconfined,
Leaving the worlds of ocean far behind,
Wings like a meteor-flash her swift career,
To the loved scene, so distant, and so dear!

Lo! the rude whirlwind rushes from its cave,
And Danger frowns—the monarch of the wave!
Lo! rocks and storms the striving bark repel,
And Death and Shipwreck ride the foaming swell!

Child of the ocean! is thy bier the surge,
Thy grave the billow, and the wind thy dirge?

Yes! thy long toil, thy weary conflict o'er,
No storm shall wake, no perils rouse thee more!
Yet, in *that* solemn hour, that awful strife,
The struggling agony for death or life,
E'en *then* thy mind, embittering every pain,
Retraced the image so beloved—in vain!
Still to sweet Home thy last regrets were true,
Life's parting sigh—the murmur of adieu!

Can war's dread scenes the hallowed ties efface,
Each tender thought, each fond remembrance chase?
Can fields of carnage, days of toil, destroy
The loved impression of domestic joy?

Ye daylight dreams! that cheer the soldier's breast,
In hostile climes, with spells benign and blest;
Soothe his brave heart, and shed your glowing ray
O'er the long march through Desolation's way;
Oh! still ye bear him from the ensanguined plain,
Armour's bright flash, and Victory's choral strain,
To that loved Home where pure affection glows,
That shrine of bliss! asylum of repose!
When all is hush'd—the rage of combat past,
And no dread war-note swells the moaning blast;
When the warm throb of many a heart is o'er,
And many an eye is closed to wake no more;
Lull'd by the night-wind, pillow'd on the ground,
(The dewy deathbed of his comrades, round!)
While o'er the slain the tears of midnight weep,
Faint with fatigue, he sinks in slumbers deep!
E'en then, soft visions, hovering round, portray
The cherish'd forms that o'er his bosom sway;
He sees fond transport light each beaming face,
Meets the warm tear-drop and the long embrace!
While the sweet welcome vibrates through his heart,
"Hail, weary soldier!—never more to part!"

And lo! at last, released from every toil,
He comes!—the wanderer views his native soil!
Then the bright raptures words can *never* speak
Flash in his eye and mantle o'er his cheek!
Then Love and Friendship, whose unceasing prayer
Implored for him each guardian-spirit's care;
Who, for his fate, through sorrow's lingering year,
Had proved each thrilling pulse of hope and fear;
In that blest moment, all the past forget—
Hours of suspense, and vigils of regret!

And oh! for him, the child of rude alarms,
Rear'd by stern danger in the school of arms!
How sweet to change the war-song's pealing note
For woodland-sounds in summer air that float!
Through vales of peace, o'er mountain wilds to roam,
And breathe his native gales, that whisper—"Home!"

Hail, sweet endearments of domestic ties,
Charms of existence! angel sympathies!
Though Pleasure smile, a soft Circassian queen!
And guide her votaries through a fairy scene,
Where sylphid forms beguile their vernal hours
With mirth and music in Arcadian bowers;
Though gazing nations hail the fiery car
That bears the Son of Conquest from afar,
While Fame's loud pæan bids his heart rejoice,
And every life-pulse vibrates to her voice;—
Yet from your source *alone*, in mazes bright,
Flows the full current of serene delight!

On Freedom's wing, that every wild explores,
Through realms of space, th' aspiring eagle soars!
Darts o'er the clouds, exulting to admire,
Meridian glory—on her throne of fire!
Bird of the Sun! his keen unwearied gaze
Hails the full moon, and triumphs in the blaze;

But soon, descending from his height sublime,
Day's burning fount, and light's empyreal clime,
Once more he speeds to joys more calmly blest,
Midst the dear inmates of his lonely nest!

Thus Genius, mounting on his bright career
Through the wide regions of the mental sphere,
And proudly waving in his gifted hand,
O'er Fancy's worlds, Invention's plastic wand,
Fearless and firm, with lightning-eye surveys
The clearest heaven of intellectual rays!
Yet, on his course though loftiest hopes attend,
And kindling raptures aid him to ascend,
(While in his mind, with high-born grandeur fraught,
Dilate the noblest energies of thought);
Still, from the bliss, ethereal and refined,
Which crowns the soarings of triumphant mind,
At length he flies, to that serene retreat,
Where calm and pure the mild affections meet;
Embosom'd there, to feel and to impart
The softer pleasures of the social heart!

Ah! weep for those, deserted and forlorn,
From every tie by fate relentless torn;
See, on the barren coast, the lonely isle,
Marked with no step, uncheer'd by human smile,
Heart-sick and faint the shipwreck'd wanderer stand,
Raise the dim eye, and lift the suppliant hand!
Explore with fruitless gaze the billowy main,
And weep—and pray—and linger—but in vain!

Thence, roving wild through many a depth of shade
Where voice ne'er echo'd, footstep never stray'd,
He fondly seeks, o'er cliffs and deserts rude,
Haunts of mankind midst realms of solitude!
And pauses oft, and sadly hears alone
The wood's deep sigh, the surge's distant moan!

All else is hush'd! so silent, so profound,
As if some viewless power, presiding round,
With mystic spell, unbroken by a breath,
Had spread for ages the repose of death!
Ah! still the wanderer, by the boundless deep,
Lives but to watch—and watches but to weep!
He sees no sail in faint perspective rise,
His the dread loneliness of sea and skies!
Far from his cherish'd friends, his native shore,
Banish'd from being—to return no more;
There must he die!—within that circling wave,
That lonely isle—his prison and his grave!

Lo! through the waste, the wilderness of snows,
With fainting step, Siberia's exile goes!
Homeless and sad, o'er many a polar wild,
Where beam, or flower, or verdure never smiled;
Where frost and silence hold their despot-reign,
And bind existence in eternal chain!
Child of the desert! pilgrim of the gloom!
Dark is the path which leads thee to the tomb!
While on thy faded cheek the arctic air
Congeals the bitter tear-drop of despair!
Yet not that fate condemns thy closing day
In that stern clime to shed its parting ray;
Not that fair nature's loveliness and light
No more shall beam enchantment on thy sight;
Ah! not for *this*—far, far beyond relief,
Deep in thy bosom dwells the hopeless grief;
But that no friend of kindred heart is there,
Thy woes to mitigate, thy toils to share;
That no mild soother fondly shall assuage
The stormy trials of thy lingering age;
No smile of tenderness, with angel power,
Lull the dread pangs of dissolution's hour;
For this alone, despair, a withering guest,
Sits on thy brow, and cankers in thy breast!

Yes! there, e'en there, in that tremendous clime,
Where desert grandeur frowns in pomp sublime;
Where winter triumphs, through the polar night,
In all his wild magnificence of might;
E'en *there*, affection's hallow'd spell might pour
The light of heaven around th' inclement shore!
And, like the vales with gloom and sunshine graced,
That smile, by circling Pyrenees embraced,
Teach the pure heart with vital fires to glow,
E'en midst the world of solitude and snow!
The halcyon's charm, thus dreaming fictions feign,
With mystic power could tranquillise the main;
Bid the loud wind, the mountain billow sleep,
And peace and silence brood upon the deep!

And thus, Affection, can *thy* voice compose
The stormy tide of passions and of woes;
Bid every throb of wild emotion cease,
And lull misfortune in the arms of peace!

Oh! mark yon drooping form, of aged mien,
Wan, yet resign'd, and hopeless, yet serene!
Long ere victorious time had sought to chase
The bloom, the smile, that once illumed his face,
That faded eye was dimm'd with many a care,
Those waving locks were silver'd by despair!
Yet filial love can pour the sovereign balm,
Assuage his pangs, his wounded spirit calm!
He, a sad emigrant! condemn'd to roam
In life's pale autumn from his ruin'd home,
Has borne the shock of Peril's darkest wave,
Where joy—and hope—and fortune—found a grave!
'Twas his, to see Destruction's fiercest band
Rush, like a Typhon, on his native land,
And roll triumphant on their blasted way,
In fire and blood, the deluge of dismay!

Unequal combat raged on many a plain,
And patriot-valour waved the sword in vain!
Ah! gallant exile! nobly, long, he bled,
Long braved the tempest gathering o'er his head!
Till all was lost! and horror's darken'd eye,
Roused the stern spirit of despair to die!

Ah! gallant exile! in the storm that roll'd
Far o'er his country, rushing uncontroll'd,
The flowers that graced his path with loveliest bloom,
Torn by the blast, were scatter'd on the tomb!
When carnage burst, exulting in the strife,
The bosom ties that bound his soul to life,
Yet one was spared! and she, whose filial smile,
Can soothe his wanderings and his tears beguile,
E'en *then*, could temper, with divine relief,
The wild delirium of unbounded grief;
And, whispering peace, conceal with duteous art
Her own deep sorrows in her inmost heart!
And now, though time, subduing every trace,
Has *mellow'd* all, he *never* can *erase*;
Oft will the wanderer's tears in silence flow,
Still sadly faithful to remember'd woe!
Then she, who feels a father's pang alone,
(Still fondly struggling to suppress *her own*),
With anxious tenderness is ever nigh
To chase the image that awakes the sigh!
Her angel-voice his fainting soul can raise
To brighter visions of celestial days!
And speak of realms, where Virtue's wing shall soar
On eagle-plume—to wonder and adore;
And friends, divided here, shall meet at last,
Unite their kindred souls—and smile on all the past!

Yes! we may hope that nature's deathless ties,
Renew'd, refined, shall triumph in the skies!

Heart-soothing thought! whose loved, consoling powers
With seraph-dreams can gild reflection's hours,
Oh! still be near, and brightening through the gloom,
Beam and ascend! the day-star of the tomb!
And smile for those, in sternest ordeals proved,
Those lonely hearts, bereft of all they loved.

Lo! by the couch where pain and chill disease
In every vein the ebbing life-blood freeze;
Where youth is taught, by stealing, slow decay,
Life's closing lesson—in its dawning day;
Where beauty's rose is withering ere its prime,
Unchanged by sorrow, and unsoil'd by time;
There, bending still, with fix'd and sleepless eye,
There, from her child, the mother learns to die;
Explores, with fearful gaze, each mournful trace,
Of ling'ring sickness in the faded face;
Through the sad night, when every hope is fled,
Keeps her lone vigil by the sufferer's bed;
And starts each morn, as deeper marks declare
The spoiler's hand—the blight of death is there!
He comes! now feebly in the exhausted frame,
Slow, languid, quivering, burns the vital flame;
From the glazed eyeball sheds its parting ray—
Dim, transient spark, that fluttering fades away!
Faint beats the hov'ring pulse, the trembling heart;
Yet fond existence lingers ere she part!

'Tis past! the struggle and the pang are o'er,
And life shall throb with agony no more;
While o'er the wasted form, the features pale,
Death's awful shadows throw their silvery veil.
Departed spirit! on this earthly sphere
Though poignant suffering mark'd thy short career,
Still could maternal love beguile thy woes,
And hush thy sighs—an angel of repose!

But who may charm *her* sleepless pang to rest,
Or draw the thorn that rankles in her breast?
And, while she bends in silence o'er thy bier,
Assuage the grief, too heart-sick for a tear?
Visions of hope in loveliest hues array'd,
Fair scenes of bliss! by fancy's hand portray'd!
And were ye doom'd with false, illusive smile,
With flattering promise, to enchant awhile?
And are ye vanish'd, never to return,
Set in the darkness of the mouldering urn?
Will no bright hour departed joys restore?
Shall the sad parent meet her child no more?
Behold no more the soul-illumined face,
The expressive smile, the animated grace?
Must the fair blossom, wither'd in the tomb,
Revive no more in loveliness and bloom?
Descend, blest faith! dispel the hopeless care,
And chase the gathering phantoms of despair;
Tell that the flower, transplanted in its morn,
Enjoys bright Eden, freed from every thorn;
Expands to milder suns, and softer dews,
The full perfection of immortal hues;
Tell that when mounting to her native skies,
By death released, the parent spirit flies;
There shall the child, in anguish mourn'd so long,
With rapture hail her midst the cherub throng,
And guide her pinion on exulting flight,
Through glory's boundless realms, and worlds of living light.

Ye gentle spirits of departed friends!
If e'er on earth your buoyant wing descends;
If, with benignant care, ye linger near,
To guard the objects in existence dear;
If, hovering o'er, ethereal band! ye view
The tender sorrows, to *your* memory true;

Oh! in the musing hour, at midnight deep,
While for your loss affection wakes to weep;
While every sound in hallow'd stillness lies,
But the low murmur of her plaintive sighs;
Oh! then, amidst that holy calm be near,
Breathe your light whisper softly in her ear;
With secret spells her wounded mind compose,
And chase the faithful tear—for you that flows:
Be near—when moonlight spreads the charm you loved
O'er scenes where once your *earthly* footstep roved.
Then, while she wanders o'er the sparkling dew,
Through glens and wood-paths, once endear'd by you,
And fondly lingers in your favourite bowers,
And pauses oft, recalling former hours;
Then wave your pinion o'er each well-known vale,
Float in the moonbeam, sigh upon the gale;
Bid your wild symphonies remotely swell,
Borne by the summer-wind from grot and dell;
And touch your viewless harps, and soothe her soul
With soft enchantments and divine control!
Be near, sweet guardians! watch her sacred rest,
When Slumber folds her in his magic vest;
Around her, smiling, let your forms arise,
Return'd in dreams, to bless her mental eyes;
Efface the memory of your last farewell—
Of glowing joys, of radiant prospects tell:
The sweet communion of the past renew,
Reviving former scenes, array'd in softer hue.

Be near when death, in virtue's brightest hour,
Calls up each pang, and summons all his power;
Oh! then, transcending Fancy's loveliest dream,
Then let your forms unveil'd around her beam;
Then waft the vision of unclouded light,
A burst of glory, on her closing sight;

Wake from the harp of heaven th' immortal strain,
To hush the final agonies of pain;
With rapture's flame the parting soul illume,
And smile triumphant through the shadowy gloom!
Oh! still be near, when, darting into day,
Th' exulting spirit leaves her bonds of clay;
Be yours to guide her fluttering wings on high
O'er many a world, ascending to the sky;
There let your presence, once her earthly joy,
Though dimm'd with tears and clouded with alloy,
Now form her bliss on that celestial shore
Where death shall sever kindred hearts no more.

Yes! in the noon of that Elysian clime,
Beyond the sphere of anguish, death, or time;
Where mind's bright eye, with renovated fire,
Shall beam on glories never to expire;
Oh! there th' illumined soul may fondly trust,
More pure, more perfect, rising from the dust,
Those mild affections, whose consoling light
Sheds the soft moonbeam on terrestrial night,
Sublimed, ennobled, shall for ever glow,
Exalting rapture—not assuaging woe!

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